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PRINCESS PUCK.

CHAPTER V.

THERESA was a conscientious person and really had Bill's welfare at heart. Miss Brownlow said she exercised a good influence over her young cousin. Theresa was rather doubtful on the subject herself, but she felt the responsibility of her aunt's expectations and determined to fulfil them if possible; only she did not quite know how to set about it. Bill proved so very mild; there seemed no occasion for a preventive and negative influence, and a positive one Theresa found difficult to compass. The only definite suggestion she had as yet made for Bill's mental and moral benefit was the invitation to the prayer-meeting. That, both in its religious and social aspects, was good; the religious side, Theresa felt, must benefit her charge, though she did not stop to consider how, religion being to her much what charms were to her forebears, good and protective, though operating in methods neither understood nor questioned. The social side of the prayer-meeting was obviously beneficial, for it was in every way desirable that Bill should mix with her elders, which would help her to grow up. Altogether the prayer-meeting was a good thing, and to it, accordingly, Theresa took her cousin on Friday evening.

They drove in the dog-cart: "We

can walk home," Theresa had said; "it is not far."

So Robert, who did not affect prayer-meetings, drove them and took the cart home again; and as Theresa disliked driving very much, this arrangement suited her better than any other. It suited Bill also, for she sat on the back seat, and was as entirely oblivious of the two in front as if she had been alone in her silent survey of the country. It was still very black and white, she found, though a day of showers and sunshine would alter the whole face of the land now. She was conscious of the coming change; there was a feeling of waiting in the air, as though the unconscious earth stood patient on the threshold of life. There were no leaves as yet among the elms, no blade in the dry, crumbling fields, no hint of green in the close-cut hedge, so black by contrast with the white road. So white the road was, so hard, stretching before them, stretching behind them; Bill looked at it and thought what a long way it could be seen in the pale strong light. Every thing could be seen, the heap of faggots, the pump by the road, the old man working in a cottage-garden,—she could even see what kind of belt he wore; she could see everything near and far,—truly a March evening was a beautiful thing. She drew in deep breaths of the thin

air; it seemed like wine within her, making the young blood dance and throb in her veins. She felt, though she hardly knew it, that it was a splendid thing to be alive: "I should like to live as long as the world lasts," she thought.

Just then they turned in at a gateway. The short drive beyond sloped down rapidly and the dog-cart entered with a jerk which nearly unseated the back passenger, who, however, was examining the garden too intently to be troubled by that. There was a large raised flower-bed in the centre of the gravel sweep, the drive dividing right and left of it. It was a circular bed planted in a geometrical pattern with Dutch bulbs; as yet the hyacinths and tulips were only green shoots, but the crocuses were in full flower and wound like a coloured ribbon across the intricate design. Bill was wondering how it was that none of the crocuses had gone blind, when the cart stopped before a square, ivy-covered house.

"T," she said, as she got down, "every single one of those crocuses has come up; they must be a good sort."

"I dare say. Mr. Perry is fond of his garden, and he has plenty of money."

Bill's acquaintance with people possessing plenty of money was limited; indeed, she could not recall anyone she knew who was in that affluent state. She looked at the Perry's house critically to see how "plenty of money" looked when it was translated into furniture and fittings. There were lots of white curtains, three or four at every window. "That is expensive," she thought; "it means so much washing." There were thick carpets on the floors, old-fashioned in design, excellent in preservation, and prodigiously ugly; the furniture in the

drawing-room was rosewood, the chairs as like as peas in a pod and all neatly covered in chintz. "I shall tell Polly our things are all right," Bill mentally determined as she sat down in a retired corner. She had been duly presented to the host and hostess, had duly made an inaudible answer to their polite remarks, and had then sunk into her corner still safe under her cousin's wing, as became one of her youth and shyness. No one in Mrs. Perry's drawing-room expected anything different; indeed all would have been surprised if she had shown greater forwardness of demeanour. Her nearest neighbour, a little old lady with a cheerful countenance and a great mosaic brooch, spoke to her; but at first Bill could not catch what she said, for she lowered her voice out of deference to the more important persons present, until it was little more than a sigh in her listener's ear. But after a word or two Bill became used to the sound and made out, as she might have guessed, that the subject of conversation was the weather.

"Dry evening," was the first she heard and then, "a nice walk from Ashelton."

Bill did not catch the connecting words, but she answered what she heard, although she did not know that she had come beyond the boundary of Ashelton that evening, and contented herself with saying that they had not walked.

"Driven?" suggested the old lady. "I expect Mr. Morton drove you and took the pony home again; such a good arrangement, and much safer than for Mrs. Morton to drive those spirited horses herself. I'm sure I wonder she has never had an accident; I quite thought there would be one when I saw her go by on Tuesday afternoon."

"Did you see us then?" Bill asked, and her neighbour explained that she lived at the house at the corner where the roads divided. Then Bill knew that this must be Miss Minchin, the lady who, Theresa said, made ample use of the opportunities for observation offered by the commanding position of her house. At that moment the entrance of some fresh arrivals caused such a buzz of conversation that Miss Minchin ventured to inquire in quite a loud voice whether Bill herself could manage a horse.

"I never tried until I came here," she answered; "I only came on Tuesday, but I have done a little since then. I drove a waggon of straw home yesterday. Tom Griggs told me he thought I should soon be able to handle most things on four legs, but I don't suppose he knows."

"You are learning to drive?" Miss Minchin asked, somewhat mystified. "Mr. Morton is teaching you? But, my dear, do be careful, he has such mettlesome horses; gentlemen seem all alike for that; there's Mr. Harborough, now, he's nearly as bad. You know Mr. Harborough?" Before Bill could answer the old lady went on: "Hush! Mr. Perry is going to speak. You must come with Mrs. Morton to see me to-morrow; I have a cat and a canary, and several things that will interest you." The last words were spoken in a shrill whisper in Bill's ear as the company settled themselves, and Mr. Perry, a trim little man some years retired from the grocery trade, called attention to the fact that the reading was about to begin. When he had made this announcement in a redundancy of words (for he was not averse to speech-making and had few opportunities), the proceedings commenced.

The subject for the evening was faith. Mr. Johnson was giving a

course of Christian virtues during that Lent, and faith happened to be the one under consideration on the evening when Bill was present. She was very much interested, though it was not a matter in which she had erred greatly hitherto; she believed largely, had much imagination, and as yet had thought little and felt less; consequently Mr. Johnson's flowery periods slid harmlessly off her still unconscious mind. She was interested, at first a little in the words, afterwards entirely by the man. Mr. Johnson was a fair man with a tendency towards the sandy, smooth, slightly florid, and with more than a tendency towards plumpness. He had for many years been curate at Ashelton, and, though he was now past middle life, it seemed that he was likely to remain curate at Ashelton, for it appeared that the Church dignitaries had not the same opinion of his worth as had some other people who need not be named. After all, curate at the three Asheltons was on the whole well enough. There was not too much work in the big straggling parish, and there was much sociability of a sort well suited to a man who had a nice taste in tea and pale sherry, and more fancy for being a whale among minnows than a minnow among whales. At Ashelton, though perhaps not exactly a whale, he could pass as a very tolerably sized fish among others of congenial dimensions, at all events when the rector was not there. As for the rector—well, poor man, he was eccentric, he had had trouble—Mr. Johnson said so leniently without any idea as to what the trouble was. For the eccentricity he could vouch: the rector had a cousin who was a bishop, in a genuine, important bishopric, and another, it was hinted, who was a peer. What man, not eccentric, would have remained all these years in a little country parish when he pos-

sessed these advantages? Then there was his passion for music, and also his inability to appreciate Mr. Johnson. Mr. Johnson had at last come to the conclusion that this inability did exist; yet even now he was not sure that it was not partly the expression of a not unnatural jealousy of his own social and parochial triumphs.

On that particular March evening Mr. Johnson knew that he had added one more to the long list of those triumphs. It was a small matter, of course, but, as he told his wife, trifles like that showed how easily he could have influenced a larger audience, had he been in command of one. The trifle in question was Bill Alardy, whose face showed how deeply interested she was in Mr. Johnson's words. She had the most expressive face imaginable, and that evening it was alive with interest. She had never taken her eyes off the speaker; she listened to every word, the tell-tale face expressing the keenest enjoyment and appreciation. So marked was this that after supper, when all were leaving, Mr. Johnson came to Theresa and shook hands with her and Bill, telling the latter impressively that he was very glad to see her at the reading.

To this Bill answered with equal impressiveness, "I am very glad I came."

Mr. Johnson smiled encouragingly. "I shall be happy if at any time I can be of help to you," he said; "I am always pleased to help any one."

Bill thanked him vaguely and went out with Theresa. She did not know what he meant, but it did not matter, as she did not feel conscious of wanting his help. In her opinion he could not improve upon that evening's performance, which had been perfectly delightful; so delightful that when she went to her room she thought about him until it became

too much for her, and turning to the little wooden bed and the chair which stood beside it, she addressed them, inanimate though they were. "My brothers and sisters," she said—and her flexible voice, far more flexible even than her face, rolled out in unctuous tones—"my brothers and sisters, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the only evidence we can present to our spiritual senses, the only evidence they need. It is the be-all and end-all, the beginning and the end of all things." She rolled the words lovingly on her tongue, swelling her face until it became almost Johnsonian in size. "Everything is faith, faith is everything." Here she stretched out a persuasive hand to the quaint little bed. "In it we live and move and have our being; being dead, we die not if in faith, being alive, we live not without it. Whatever is, is not, whatever is not, is, was, and shall be, world without end, amen."

But Theresa did not hear this, and held to her first opinion as to the kind of spiritual good Bill derived from the prayer-meeting. Of the social good she was not so sure, until her young cousin came to her on Saturday morning and suggested that they should go and see Miss Minchin in the afternoon. "Let us go," she said; "she promised to show me her cat and bird and other things."

Theresa acceded to the request, feeling that last night's meeting was not without results since it had introduced Miss Minchin, and implanted a desire to visit in Bill's mind.

Miss Minchin's house was set at the corner where the high road from Wrugglesby divided, the one way to go through Ashelton to the church, the other to the lanes and so to the more distant village of Sales Green. "It is a terribly public place," Miss Gruet, Miss Minchin's particular

friend, always said with commiseration. Her own house was privacy itself, the lower windows looking solely on to laurel bushes tall and elderly, the upper as effectually screened by a great horse-chestnut tree. "It was most secluded," Miss Gruet said, and, solely out of pity no doubt, she often left her seclusion to cheer her friend in the publicity which had fallen to her share. She did so on the afternoon when Theresa and Bill made their call, but did not arrive until Miss Minchin had duly shown her treasures. Bill was interested in them all,—in the cat asleep on the violet bed, only dislodged with the end of an umbrella, and the canary before the window in a green cage with a piece of grey paper neatly tacked round the lower part to keep the seeds in and the draughts out. This piece of paper was often changed, varying in colour with the Church festivals and other important events, always going into mourning on the death of royalty; at least, the cage did, black paper Miss Minchin found difficult to obtain, as she explained to Bill.

"When the poor dear Duke of Clarence died," she said, "I could not get a scrap. I put a piece of black cashmere round the cage, but the little fellow (it was not this canary then but another one) did not like it a bit."

The subject of discussion here gave a short burst of song when he ceased. Miss Minchin encouraged him to continue. "Sweet!" she said; "go on, my pretty, sweet!" He likes someone to whistle to him, but of course I can't do that."

"I can," said Bill, and gave a trilling imitation of the caged singer.

"I declare," exclaimed Miss Minchin, "it's quite charming! I'm sure if girls had whistled like that in my young days no one would have thought

it unladylike. They did think so then, my dear, but now, to be sure, things are quite changed; every one can do as they like, and more besides."

It was just then that Miss Gruet came in. "I thought you must be coming here," Miss Minchin said briskly. "I said so to Mrs. Morton just now, when I saw you coming down the road."

"You can see everyone from your window," Miss Gruet said with a touch of severity. "I do believe from your back bedroom you could almost see the field-path that leads to the rectory."

"Yes," Miss Minchin admitted, "I can if I move the toilet-glass. Of course I never do move it, unless it happens that the blind goes wrong, as it does sometimes. It is such a tiresome blind; I remember I had to see to it the day Tom Davies went to put his banns up; he thought no one saw him go sneaking to the rectory, but I did, for I was mending my blind."

Miss Gruet professed herself properly shocked — and interested. "There is no telling what you might not see," she said, "and Mr. Dane a bachelor too!"

Miss Minchin hastened to assure the company that she had never seen anything bad; indeed, only yesterday morning, when the troublesome blind went wrong again, she had seen quite a pleasant sight — Mr. Dane and young Mr. Harborough in earnest conversation. "So nice," she said, "for a young man like that to be such friends with the rector."

The others agreed with her, and talked over this item of intelligence in all its aspects. A little later, Theresa and Miss Gruet being at the time deep in a discussion of the difficulty of preventing mice from eating cheese-mats, Bill led the conversation back to Harborough.

"The Harboroughs of Gurnett," she said; "does this Mr. Harborough belong to them?"

"No, indeed," Miss Minchin answered, almost shocked at the idea. "The Harboroughs of Gurnett are the Harboroughs of Wood Hall, one of the oldest families in the county, just as Wood Hall is one of the finest places. At least, it used to be, but times are sadly changed from what they were. The Harboroughs are poor now and cannot afford to keep the place up; not but what it is fine still,—have you ever seen it?"

"No, but I have heard about it," Bill said eagerly. "There is a room there, the library I think, with a fireplace so big that a quadrille could be danced on the hearth; and the great hall is so wide that a coach and four could turn in it without touching the wall on either side."

"Yes, my dear, yes." The old lady's tone was sad, as of one who remembers departed greatness. "Yes; so they say; they say many things about the place. It is sad to think of the way in which it is being left, sad to think of the Harboroughs, a good old family."

"I thought they were bad," Bill remarked, remembering the common report of the district.

"So they were, bad and extravagant too; they nearly all were, and that is why they are so poor now."

Bill did not express any opinion on good old families which were also bad; she only remarked meditatively, "I think I shall go to Wood Hall."

"You can't," Miss Minchin said; "Mr. Harborough lives there now."

"Yes; but part of the grounds are open, are they not? I could see them, as much as can be seen."

"I would not, if I were you." Miss Minchin's voice was a solemn warning.

"Why not?"

"Because,—it does not seem exactly

right for a young girl to go into those grounds."

"But why?"

Miss Minchin dropped her voice half a tone lower. "Mr. Harborough is a bad old man," she said, "a very wicked old man. It does not become me to speak ill of one in his station, belonging to this county too; still facts are facts, and they are terrible."

"What has he done?"

Bill showed, or Miss Minchin thought she showed, too much interest in the subject, and, either because she would not, or else because she could not, she gave no further information. Whereupon Bill, failing to hear anything about the one Mr. Harborough, returned to the other.

"Is he related to the Wood Hall people?" she asked.

"No, oh dear, no," Miss Minchin answered. "He is an Australian, or a New Zealander, or something American and colonial; I am rather uncertain about those places, but he comes from one of them. Besides, my dear, consider, he is a farmer, nothing but a farmer,—a very good profession; I am not saying anything against it," she added hastily remembering Theresa's husband; "indeed, I should be very sorry to, seeing that all the patriarchs were farmers, so to say. Still, you must admit it is not quite suitable to a member of the county families. I know old families are not respected as they used to be, but no one would think of classing them with farmers even now."

Bill acquiesced and then observed: "It is queer he should have the same name."

"Oh, I don't know," Miss Minchin said, bridling a little. "It is not such an uncommon name; besides the old families spread so. Long ago they were, no doubt, much larger than they now are; there is no telling where all the younger branches go."

"You think he is a younger branch? Then he should be as good as the others."

"Certainly not: for one reason he has not lived in the same place so long; he and his forebears have gone out from among the family; they have not kept up the family traditions. There are many traditions in a family like that, many, and much property too. Why, do you know the side chapel in our parish church is the property of the Harboroughs?"

Bill did not know it, neither did she see the force of it as an argument; nevertheless she was interested. "The whole chapel?" she asked.

"Yes, the little chapel and the little altar and all complete. Of course they never go there, for they are Catholics. I sometimes think perhaps if Mr. Harborough had not been a Catholic—but there! We mustn't be uncharitable. Do you like reading? Yes? Then I should advise you to read the history of the county; you will find all about Wood Hall there and many other things you will like. I don't think Mrs. Morton has a history, but Miss Gruet has a very nice book of Selections, which I have no doubt she will lend to you; I do believe I have it in the house now." She had borrowed it when Harborough first came and had not yet returned it. "We can ask her to allow you to take it home with you; I'm sure she will."

This Miss Gruet expressed herself happy to do, and Bill carried the book away with her when she left with Theresa a few minutes later.

CHAPTER VI.

THE parish church of Ashelton was very old. It was said in Miss Gruet's selected history of the county to be of great antiquarian interest; but antiquaries did not abound in Ashelton,

and neither the inhabitants nor their friends troubled their heads much about the stone-work of the fourteenth century, or any of the other commended points of interest. At one time there had been a couple of letters in a Wrugglesby paper about a little Last Judgment window of obscure meaning; but the letters had long been forgotten, and the rector's new organ partly hid the window now.

Bill paid particular attention to the window on the first Sunday that she went to Ashelton church; but she had just been reading about it and knew where to look for it. For the rest, that which chiefly pleased her were the grinning goblin faces which looked out from the capitals of pillars and the niches of windows,—from every place where the old builders could put them; there was even one carved at the end of Theresa's pew. Everybody had a pew, and almost everybody went to church in Ashelton. The Morton's pew was conveniently situated for keeping an eye on the rest of the congregation. There was only one better placed for that purpose, Miss Minchin's; but she, as she always maintained, had not selected it herself, her dear mother having done so long before her time,—in which case, it is possible to conceive that Miss Minchin inherited her tastes, as well as her pew, from her mother. Bill, from her place of vantage, looked at everybody, and everybody, with even greater interest, looked at her. In fact so much did they look that she, though as a rule somewhat indifferent on the subject of clothes, was rather glad that Polly had furbished up her winter hat before she left Wrugglesby. She gave the hat a little pull forward as she thought of it, and looked across Mrs. Perry's purple bonnet to the Harborough chapel. It was to the left of

the chancel, a step higher than the main body of the church and in a measure cut off from it by a continuance of the slender oak screen which stood before the chancel itself. Bill looked at it thoughtfully, opining that there could never have been enough Harbours to fill it, unless they brought their servants with them. There was a small altar with a cross upon it, and above, an old window where fat cherubs smiled in starch-blue smoke. She wondered what its meaning was, as others had wondered before her, and came to the conclusion that it was a pity the starch clouds, if they were clouds, were not red instead of blue: "It could not possibly make the place darker than it now is," she thought, "and it would look very much nicer."

It is to be feared that Bill did not pay very much attention to the sermon. She looked about her over much, but she could still say with truth, when asked by Miss Gruet afterwards, that she had enjoyed the service, for she had a keen ear for music, and the music at Ashelton church was very good. She listened with rapt attention to what Miss Minchin called "the set pieces," and joined enthusiastically in the hymns, singing loud and sweet, for though her flexible voice was perhaps better suited to the mimicry of other sounds than anything else, it still possessed a rich sweetness in its many-noted variations.

When Bella came home from visiting Theresa in the winter she confessed to Polly that she had found Sunday afternoon a little dull; that is to say the first Sunday afternoon; on the second she had gone for a walk and—Bill had not heard any more, so she did not know what prevented the second Sunday afternoon from being as dull as the first. She did not herself find the afternoon dull, as she went up to the garret to look over

some books. Theresa in bringing away her girlish treasures from Miss Brownlow's had accidentally brought a few things which were not hers.

"I have been meaning to take them back several times," she said, "but I keep forgetting. I really hardly know what they are now; there are one or two books belonging to Polly and to you, or your father. I put them in a box in the garret when I had to turn the spare room out; you might get them down some time and put them with your things, if you will."

Bill said she would, and chose Sunday afternoon to do it. She left Robert and Theresa reading and dozing by the fire with the port and oranges on the table beside them. "Don't you want any dessert?" Theresa had said. But Bill did not care about port and oranges; she filled her pocket with nuts and went to the garret to eat them while she looked over the books. These she found in a lidless packing-case neatly covered over with brown paper. The one on the top was *HOLY LIVING AND DYING*. "That's Auntie's: Theresa must have got it from the top shelf in the dining-room; the books there were mostly hers; I suppose she thought they all were and took the lot." The next was a small brown volume, *PLAIN TRUTHS FOR PLAIN PEOPLE*, in which she found Polly's name—"That's just the book for Polly; a plain person she certainly is, and the plain truth is a very good thing for her to start on, considering how she can trim it." The two volumes were laid aside, and the next dive into the box brought out a book she was pleased to see but did not before know that they possessed, an old history of that part of the county. "Whose is this, I wonder—why, it's mine!" She had turned to the first page and seen her own name *Wilhelmina Alardy*.

"That's funny,"—she was cracking her nuts with her teeth as she looked. "At least, I don't know that it is so funny after all; I expect it was stuck up at the top with the other old things, so I never knew about it. Of course I am not that Wilhelmina; that's Grandmother."

Bill looked long at the book, for she had not many relics, or even tales, of her own grandmother, as she counted her father's mother in distinction from her mother's mother whom she shared equally with the cousins. There was not, to be sure, much of this lady to share; not one of the four cousins had even a memory of her, though of their own grandmothers the others each had something to tell. Polly had a good many tales about hers, with an ugly old portrait, too, and a heavy locket she used to wear. Bella and Theresa could remember theirs plainly; they had stayed with her when they were little girls, and still had the coral necklaces she gave them the last Christmas she was alive. But Bill had neither tales nor trinkets; her parents had both died when she was very young, and Miss Brownlow knew no traditions of the Alardys and few facts concerning them, except that Bill's father was an only son, and that for relations the girl must depend on her; so it happened that Bill knew little about her grandmother, except that she herself was named after her. There was a little wooden box-ottoman in the spare bedroom at Langford House, which, she had been told, used to belong to this grandmother. She had looked inside it once and found nothing but papers, which did not prove very interesting; a few letters, not easy to decipher and not, so far as she had tried them, entertaining, half a dozen bills, part of an old account-book, some recipes for cough-mixture and tea-cakes, a

few odd sheets of paper and manuscript music, and some legal-looking documents which were quite beyond her comprehension. The greater part of this miscellaneous collection seemed to have belonged to her mother; a few of the less intelligible were of an older date, and the music and some scraps of poetry were not dated at all. Bill had thought of carrying the poetry away, as the only thing there which interested her; but since she had gone to the box without Miss Brownlow's permission, she decided that she had better not take anything out, and learned the lines by heart instead. Then she shut the box, and gave up any hope of boasting as intimate an acquaintance with her grandmother as the other cousins did with theirs.

That was in the winter. She had not thought any more about it until this Sunday afternoon when she unexpectedly came upon the history of the county with her grandmother's name on the fly-leaf. She was delighted with her discovery, partly because it was her grandmother's, but chiefly because it was the very book she wanted. Settling herself comfortably on an empty tea-chest, she proceeded to study it and the old map of the district which she found folded inside. When at last she was called downstairs for tea she was still full of her treasure, and told Robert and Theresa about it. They listened, amused by the interest she attached to it and the attraction she found in both book and map.

"I believe the map must be a good one," she said at last; "it is so clear, I think I could find my way anywhere by it."

"Where do you want to find your way?" Robert asked smiling.

"Oh, to lots of places, to Gurnett for one. I think I shall walk to Gurnett to-morrow; may I, Theresa?"

"It is rather a long way, but go if you like." Theresa perhaps thought a long walk would be better for her young cousin than spending too much time with the animals in the yard.

The next morning, accordingly, Bill, armed with her map and some sandwiches for refreshment by the way, started on her walk. The distance might be long, but she could not remember any time in her life when she had been really tired. It seemed to her that mere walking was not enough, and once fairly started in the lonely lanes and quiet fields, she broke into a run for pure lightness of heart and ecstasy of living. Soon she was out on a road again, and here she walked more soberly, looking to right and left, noting the veil of green that was spreading over the hedges, enjoying to the full the day and the walk and the solitude.

And so Gurnett was reached, almost too soon, and the sandwiches eaten behind a grassy bank, very much too soon considering it was not yet twelve. After that the map was pulled out and considered thoughtfully. It was some time before she could find on it the exact spot where she now was, but at last she did. "Here I am, here — oh, yes, these must be the cross-roads; there is Wood Hall, over there, and here comes the lane between, the second turning after the cross-roads. The little path ought to cross just where the road joins the lane; I wonder if I shall find it; it seems to go straight from Corbycroft on one side of the lane to Wood Hall on the other, or rather to the little church in Wood Hall grounds. I don't see what it can have been made for, but it must be a real path since it is marked; if anyone says anything to me I shall show him the map."

Having come to this satisfactory conclusion Bill folded up her map and went on. In due time she came to

the junction of the road and lane, but there was no indication that a footpath existed in any direction. In fact, the country itself on the left-hand side had undergone something of a change, for whereas her map showed that there had been a sort of park, the property of the distant hall, Corbycroft, there now seemed to be nothing but pasture-fields. She climbed the steep bank, the lane here being considerably below the level of the fields, and looked round. There was nothing but pasture-land, green, curving, sloping gradually away from her. A clump of elms stood in the centre, beautiful trees, tawny with the catkins which hung from their black branches; but there was no park, only pasture-land sloping down to the farm in the distance. And the farm looked very much as if it were a farm and not a hall; perhaps it was the remains of the old hall patched up and serving as a farmhouse; though, to be sure, her history had spoken of a hall, a small off-manor belonging to the Corbys, a family who seemed to have had their head-quarters and more important property away in the north of the county, in the direction of the coast. The map and history were alike old, and Bill was forced to admit that things might have changed since they were made.

But if the left side of the lane was disappointing, the right more than fulfilled expectations. The ground sloped sharply up on that side; Wood Hall evidently stood on a hill and appeared to be hidden among trees, for the slope as far as Bill could see was covered with forest. It was not a trim park but a thicket, a wild young forest growing up as it could about the stumps of veteran oaks and beeches long since sacrificed to the axe. In some places the young trees almost choked each other with their

crowded growth ; in others they struggled for existence with the old pollards that still held their ground. Brambles and moss and last year's fern covered the paths and choked the water-courses ; here and there a tree, too lightly rooted to withstand the winters' storms, or too old to bear the weight of its years, had fallen and lay as it fell. All was neglected, all growing, in crowded thicket or open glade, as only nature unassisted can grow ; for it was genuine woodland, where the sunshine filtered through a close-woven roof of branches and chased dancing shadows over last year's leaves ; thickets of thorn breaking into leaf, primroses hiding in the moss at their feet ; beeches, tall and straight as pillars of stone, a cathedral twilight in their shade ; pollard oaks still brown in sheltered places ; the glossy darkness of holly, the stately grace of slim young larches lightly tasselled in earliest green ; silver birches, old trees, their white bark cracked and swelled, blackened by many years ; young trees, a lace-work of branches, a tangle of supple stems and bursting buds.

Bill was over the low boundary fence now. There was no evidence of a path, but there ought to have been ; it was marked on her map and she was going to find it, so she began the ascent in the direction in which it should have been. Up she went, the ground soft and irregular, here the dead leaves of many years blown into hollows rustling about her feet, there the rich black earth patched with moss, emerald and gray and golden brown. An old pollard lay as it had fallen ; about its head fungus had gathered, and under its side primroses grew. Higher up, where the leaves were fewer, in sheltered ledges, beneath the twisty coils of beech-roots there were more primroses, plenty of them, and everywhere

anemones, fairy flowers that danced among the dead bracken. The sun, hidden by the hill, looked down through the forest aisles, threading the whole place with arrows of light so that all around there was a lattice of woven light and shadow, while, before, there stretched a path golden as Jacob's way to heaven.

Involuntarily the girl stood still, clasping her hands tight on one another, while her breath came fast. All round stretched this living woodland, thrilling with its growing, stirring life ; the bare trees, brown and purple and deep blue in their shadows, yet touched with the breath of spring, faintest green, or gold, or sparkling where the sun caught their yet unopened buds. The very earth was audible, alive, as it breathed forth its moist sweetness ; and the birds sang their anthem of praise for the world's eternal, ever recurring youth.

She stood, a little brown figure in the lonely wood, her whole soul going out to the great mother Earth, her heart filled with a passionate, inarticulate gladness. "Oh, God !" she said, "how good, how good it all is !"

She said it aloud because she had not outgrown that stage of savagedom which feels, with the Druids of old, that God is in the woods. A chaffinch on a crab-tree above her head looked down and to another hid in the catkin'd branches of a hornbeam cried, "Come and see, what d'ye think ! What d'ye think !" And the other replied with exactly the same words, or at least it seemed so to Bill ; she listened a moment, then answered them with a call so like their own that they might well have been puzzled by it if she had not at that moment begun to sing and frightened them both to the safe distance of a higher bough.

"There's laughter for the May-time,"—

She sang and her voice was like a lark's in its complete gladness—

"The morning of the year, the year—"

and the singing was merged into ripples of sound neither song nor laughter and yet a wild sweet blending of both.

"Well, young woman, I hope you are satisfied."

Bill stopped abruptly and faced the speaker, an old man on the higher ground just above her. He may have approached by some path hidden in the thicket on the right, or he may have been close at hand waiting till now to declare himself; she did not know which, neither did she know what was expected of her, so she only answered truthfully, "Yes."

"I am glad to hear it." She looked puzzled, and he added abruptly: "You are trespassing,—do you know it?"

The light began to dawn on Bill's mind; she had forgotten all about the map and the footpath, but now she remembered and answered eagerly: "No, no, I am not really, at least I don't think I can be; there is a foot-path somewhere about here; I can't have got far from it."

"There is no foot-path."

"But it is marked on my map," and Bill began to unfold the paper in which she had for greater security wrapped her treasure.

"I can't help your map; there is no foot-path here and there never was. I think I should know considering that the place belongs to me."

"Are you Mr. Harborough?" Bill's face beamed with satisfaction.

"I am; the fact seems to afford you pleasure."

"I am pleased," Bill admitted. Having once got herself into a difficulty she never had any hesitation

about going through with it, in which course she was often helped by a serene unconsciousness of her position and offences, a quality Polly reckoned high in the list of her condemned exhibitions of no "gumption." "I am pleased. I—I had heard about you."

"I am indeed gratified;" he spoke with a sarcastic courtesy somewhat wasted on his hearer. "Judging by your flattering anxiety to make my acquaintance, I must conclude that what you heard was to my credit."

"It was interesting," Bill said doubtfully.

Whereupon the old man laughed. "In that case," he said, "I must conclude it was not to my credit."

Without replying Bill unfolded her map. "This is the foot-path," she said, and began tracing it with her finger.

"I don't want to see your map, child." He was looking curiously at the small brown figure. "Look up," he said, "I would rather see your face. Tell me where you learnt to sing and laugh and whistle to the birds all in a breath."

"I don't know; I suppose I was made like that," she still persistently spread out the map. "My cousin Polly," she explained, without glancing up, "says my father was a singer, a poor one, you know, not anything much, but perhaps I inherited it from him. Sometimes, though, Polly says he was a ventriloquist or even a clown; I don't think she really knows.—See, here is the footpath."

"Whose is this map?" asked Mr. Harborough who had taken it from her and was examining it through a gold-rimmed glass.

"Mine."

"But you did not mark that path; it was done years ago."

"Yes, when the map was made."

"No, certainly not; it was put in

afterwards, that is easy to see. Even if I did not know that, as no such path exists, it could not have been printed then or at any other time."

He dropped his glass and handed the map back to Bill who, after looking at it a little, began to see that he was correct.

"Then there is no path here after all," she said in a tone of woeful disappointment. "I should like to know who marked it on the map!"

"So should I, so should I very much. Where did you get the thing?"

"I found it in an old book of my grandmother's."

"Your grandmother?" he said impatiently. "What was your grandmother, who was she, how did she come by the book and the map, whose were they before?"

Bill could give him no information, and he held out his hand for the map again. She gave it to him and he examined it critically. "There were very few people who could have put that in," he said thoughtfully.

"Then there is a path!" Bill exclaimed.

"No, there is not, and there never was. Come with me, just a few steps. There,—now look down, your path should pass the pond by that stream, do you see? That boggy place, that is where it is marked to go; that place has always been the same. What do you think of men who chose that way by preference,—is it likely they would do it? What should you think of them?"

"I should think they were in a great hurry, and perhaps, that it was night," and Bill looked down into the marshy, overgrown hollow, at a loss to understand.

Her companion's voice aroused her: "What about this grandmother of yours?" he asked abruptly.

"I don't know anything; she has

been dead a long time, but I will find out if I can."

"Will you? Perhaps you think you will also find out about this mysterious path?"

"Yes."

Bill was a painfully persistent person. It may have been that Mr. Harborough thought so, or it may have been that he still wished to keep her to enliven the tedium of the day, for he said coolly: "I will tell you if you like. There is no path, it is true, but the way marked on your map was taken one night by men in a hurry to reach the chapel of ease further on in these grounds."

"They made a path for themselves!" Bill cried. "They were in a hurry and went the nearest way! What were they doing? Why did they want to go to the chapel?"

Mr. Harborough laughed at her eagerness. "My dear young lady," he said, "I will explain if you wish, only we must really walk on. I am sorry to say I can no longer stand an indefinite time even to discuss anything so romantic as you seem to think this tale. Let us go on,—this way. Now for the romance: to begin with, do you know a certain old tradition in connection with carrying a corpse? It may linger still, though I hardly think it, but at the time I am speaking of it was not infrequently believed that the way along which a body had been carried for burial became a path for ever, became what is called a right of way. Mind, this is tradition I am telling you, not fact; it is not fact and it never was. If twenty bodies were carried through my grounds for burial no right of way would be established, but at one time some people firmly believed such a thing to be the case."

"Then the men were carrying a body?" Bill's face was flushed with excitement. "And the person who

marked my map knew about it and believed the tradition?"

"Yes. The question is, who marked your map?"

"Did not many people know about carrying the body that way?"

"Not many, and certainly very few could have marked your map with the accuracy with which I believe it to be marked."

"The burying was private, then?"

Bill was anxious to make the most of her romance. Her companion watched her eagerness with an amused face, and as they came suddenly on to a gravel path, he said with an air of impenetrable mystery: "Very private, I should say, at that time, very private indeed."

CHAPTER VII.

IT was an axiom of Polly's that if you can't be clever, you had better be a fool. This, needless to state, was first said in reference to Bill who, Polly considered, fell into the last category and fell there comfortably. "Providence, or something else, helps fools," was Polly's opinion, "while it leaves moderately sensible people to shift for themselves. Things always turn out right for fools. Whatever muddle Bill blundered into, I believe she would blunder out of it again not one bit the worse." The day that Bill went in search of the right of way at Wood Hall was possibly an illustration of this faculty; for on that occasion, though she had the ill-luck to blunder on the owner of the property, she was not ignominiously turned out of the place, threatened with prosecution and other penalties; on the contrary, she was—"Well, treated in a way in which I should not have been treated," Polly said with an indignant sniff. Wherein she certainly spoke the truth, but then, as Bella pointed out,

Bill was not Polly; though what Bill was that she should please the master of Wood Hall, neither could quite say. They did not know him.

After all, there was not much to know, only a lonely old man who had outlived friends and health and amusements. He had come to Wood Hall to die, he said, for it was well fitting that he, the last of the family in a direct line, should die in the neglected home. Certainly he had never used it much as a home; perhaps he had not cared to do so in reduced state, perhaps, more likely, he had little interest in a country life. One autumn, a long time ago, he had spent a month or two at the old hall, which was only some five miles from the house where the high sheriff for the year was living. People said that this proximity had something to do with Mr. Harborough's visit; and certainly there was some scandal about the sheriff's wife which had the effect of closing the doors of the neighbouring gentry upon him for a time, at least of those who still cherished certain provincial notions of morality. But that was all a very old tale, a tale almost forgotten now. Miss Minchin and her compeers might recall it, but to the younger generation Mr. Harborough and his doings were little more than a name, for since that time Wood Hall had seen but very little of him. Indeed, he affected a cynical indifference for the old house, which was possibly genuine enough, though it had not prevented his coming to pass his last lonely days there. Lonely they were, and tedious he often found them; tedious when he was ill, more tedious still when he was well. It was to this tedium, and to the fact that he was moderately well that day, that Bill owed the interest she had for him; that and, perhaps, some little charm her youth had for the old rake.

Whatever may have been the cause, certainly she did interest him, for when he led her through the wood and out on to the path he showed no inclination to let her go. The path was a weed-grown gravel sweep, dividing the wood on the one side from a shrubbery on the other. Here a man with a wheeled chair was waiting the arrival of his master.

"Oh," Bill exclaimed as she saw the path between the trees, "I have come out at the wrong place! I had better go back."

"And lose your way, and trespass still further on my property?"

"I will be very careful."

"I dare say." The old man seated himself in the chair as he spoke. "Don't you think you have trespassed enough for one day?"

Bill did not consider that she had exactly trespassed, but she was not sure that she could make anyone else, say a magistrate, take the same view; neither was she sure what the penalty for trespass might be, so she only said: "I am very sorry; I thought the map was right, though I certainly did not see a path."

"On the strength of the thought you went to look? Yes? Well, supposing I let you off this time—"

"I will never do it again."

"—Let you off, I say, on a condition."

"What condition?" Bill asked cautiously.

"That, as a penance for coming here, you finish the song you began in the wood."

"Is that all? I'll certainly do that. It is not a real song, only a verse of poetry and I don't sing it quite right. The last line should be 'In winter rest is sweet,' only I like it best the other way. Shall I sing it now?" And receiving an answer in the affirmative, she sang without more ado:

"There's laughter for the May-time,
The morning of the year;
There's work for all the day-time,
When summer's noon is here;
The victor's crown of glory
The harvest home shall greet;
But after life's long story
There's the devil's bill to meet!
The devil's bill—"

she sang till all the wood around her seemed full of laughing voices—

"The devil's bill, the devil's bill, the devil's bill to meet!"

Seeing that the condition laid upon her was a light one she felt bound to fulfil it to the uttermost and to do her best, using all the tricks of voice and tone that she knew. In this laudable endeavour her success was such that even the stoical attendant with the chair, who, it might have been presumed, had outlived astonishment in his master's service, looked at her in surprise, while Mr. Harborough himself was delighted.

"Bravo!" he exclaimed. "What a voice it is! They ought to put you on the stage, the variety-stage."

Bill was gratified, but not unduly moved. She had a tolerably clear idea that her vocal tricks had not much real value, and, as she wanted to get home, she did not care to stay for more compliments.

"You see, I have got to get back to Ashelton," so she concluded her explanation.

"Ashelton," Mr. Harborough exclaimed; "you cannot get there till after three o'clock. You surely do not mean to go fasting? You must not do that. You will perhaps give me the pleasure of your company at lunch? Yes? You had better; they will have eaten up everything by the time you get home. Come, you must not say no; that song deserves something more than a wander in the wood. Little Miss Tucker sang for

her supper,—no, for her lunch. I promise that you shall not be late in getting home, the carriage can take you as far as you like on your return journey."

Bill was not troubled with many even rudimentary ideas of propriety. The sandwiches were little more than a memory, and, besides,—a reason which influenced her most of all—if she accepted the invitation she would see Wood Hall. Consequently she did accept and, walking beside the chair, accompanied Mr. Harborough to the house.

What was it like? Bill sometimes tried to describe it, but she never succeeded, and always ended by saying: "If it were mine, I would never, never give it up; I would fight for every brick of it, every timber, every stone. I would sell everything to keep it; it would break my heart to let it go after it had belonged to my people for so many generations. It is a house that is just weighed down with years; I think it must be almost awful to have all those years behind you."

It was with a hushed sense of the awe belonging to a great house which has reached its declining days that Bill entered the wide arched doorway. She had said, as they came from the wood, how much she wanted to see the big hall of local fame, so, by Mr. Harborough's orders, they went by the long west front of the house. It was a huge pile, built of bricks which were neither purple nor red, but of that tint which only the centuries can mix, with rows of mullioned windows, set not too straight by the hands of Tudor builders, and pressed yet more aslant by the weight of time upon them. Above was a roof high-gabled, many-peaked, running this way and that; below, stretching to right and left, a terraced walk led to gardens where yew hedges and pleached allies

recalled the days of hooped petticoats and powdered heads, or even of older times when the men of trunk-hose and mighty hand cast bowls on the smooth turfed green. But everywhere was decay; even the spring sunshine and the glad singing birds could not destroy the sense of death and decay, —blistered paint and lichen stone, sagging roof and darkened windows, grass on the terrace, weeds between the stones, unclipped hedges, the rose-walks a tangle of thorns; and the great, sad, grand old house looking down on it all.

To this place Bill came, out of the spring sunshine and the living air into the great hall. It was not quite so great as tradition said, but still of size enough to tempt some mad Harborough of bygone days to try to turn his coach in its width. Vast it was, with its dark walls hung with tapestry rotten past repair, its dark polished floor, and its fireplace where a man might well share the hearth with the logs and not then be over-near the blaze. Above the mantel-piece were the arms of the house, the house that had seen its best days; the dragons' heads, deep cut in polished wood, grinned down malignantly on the little intruder whom the Harborough of to-day had brought from his woods. She paused a moment, awed by the sense of past greatness, by the weight of the years that lay behind, by the thought of the stately women who had passed that way before her. Then she went on, and as she went her light step gained a stateliness, her figure a dignity which well became the place and made old Harborough ask himself if the child had not some good blood in her after all.

He found himself pondering over the same question again later on, for Bill, like most born mimics, often unconsciously imitated those she was with, frequently, without being aware

of it, catching her manner from theirs, sometimes shaping even her speech and accent according to those of the person to whom she spoke. Thus, as Mr. Harborough treated her with an almost exaggerated courtesy, she returned him the same, and, since she was keenly conscious of the dignity belonging to the old house, she shaped her behaviour in accordance with it. As for her host, he was half surprised, half amused, the amusement growing, however, as he led her to talk. Nobody had found her conversation amusing before; Carrie and Alice, though they sometimes laughed, more often professed a contempt for her and all her sayings, even while they half feared her many mocking voices. Certainly no one had laughed at her thoughts and replies; she could not herself always see a reason for her host's laughter, but it was plain that he did. He was old, she thought, and therefore easily pleased, lonely and therefore not very critical; but his appreciation encouraged her, the wine (the first she had ever tasted) excited her, and she talked as she had never talked before, he leading her on till she had bewitched herself.

"I tried to amuse him a little while, poor old man," she told Polly meekly afterwards. "I really owed him something for the good food he gave me. Still, I think I did it more because I liked it than for anything else."

To which Polly, having but small opinion of Bill's powers of amusing, only made reply, "I dare say."

Mr. Harborough, however, who had lived in seclusion so long now that a small thing entertained him, vowed, far on in the afternoon, that Bill was the best of good company. In acknowledgment of which compliment Bill swept him a curtsy, with three fingers on her lips in the fashion of the china ladies on Miss Minchin's mantel-piece.

Then she said she must go home, and in so saying, it is to be feared that the imp in her got the upper hand, prompting her to the character she loved, for the tone and manner of her words suggested Mr. Johnson.

Carrie and Alice did not like Bill's mimicry, but Mr. Harborough was otherwise, and he recognised the original almost before Bill was aware of it herself.

"I must come and hear that parson of yours," he laughed.

"Why don't you?" Bill suddenly became serious. "There is the Harborough chapel in Ashelton church; what is the good of having a chapel all to yourself if you never use it?"

"I do not belong to the Church of England."

Bill remembered Miss Minchin's words. "Oh," she began apologetically, but then a magnificent idea occurred to her or to some spirit of mischief that possessed her. She cast a quick glance at Harborough, her eyes ablaze with light.

"What is it now?" he asked.

"Nothing;—at least, you would not do it—I don't believe you could."

"Try me," he answered; "lay your commands upon me and they are obeyed."

"It is not a command; but it would be,—I should like to see what would happen."

"In what case?"

"If you had a service in your chapel. I don't know if you could, but I should almost think so; it is your own; you could have a Roman Catholic service there as well as we could have a Protestant one in our part, couldn't you? I should like to see what would happen if you did!"

"I should probably be prosecuted," Harborough said; "that is what would most likely happen."

Bill sighed. "I never thought of that," she said.

"Did you not?" he answered. "Neither should I if I wanted the service, or rather, wanted to see what would happen."

"You would risk it?"

"What will you give me if I do?"

Harborough had little respect for either religion, less still for his neighbours' feelings. As for Bill, neither thought occurred to her; the thing appealed to her as many an act, incomprehensible to a man for its folly or its wanton mischief, appeals to the superabundant energy of boyhood. It was simply a desire to see what would happen, a sporting appreciation of an explosion with no realisation of consequences painful to other people.

"What would you give me?" he asked.

"What do you want?"

He hesitated a moment, and then said: "Come and see me again, and we will talk it over."

She agreed readily: "Yes, if Theresa will let me."

"Theresa must let you."

Bill thought it was probable that she would and said so, but Mr. Harborough, possibly judging from a wider experience, was not so sure and did not seem content with the arrangement.

"Why ask?" he said.

"Because I must; she won't mind."

"But supposing she does?"

"She won't; I shall be able to come."

"You think so? Then let us make this bargain: if I do as you suggest, you will come once more to talk over the terms."

"Very well; I will come once, she is sure to let me; but when I come, supposing I don't like your terms, supposing they don't seem fair to me, what am I to do? Must I fulfil them?"

He told her that she need not,

laughing at her caution, as a servant announced that the carriage was waiting.

So Bill took her leave and drove away in state, though she did not think it necessary to complete her journey in the Harborough carriage; in fact she dismissed it at the entrance of one of the lanes and went the rest of the way home on foot.

"Did you have a nice walk?" Theresa asked her young cousin when she met her at the door.

"Oh, yes, glorious! I have had such a good time. I went into Wood Hall, not the grounds only, but the house too. You never saw such a place; it is,—I can't describe it."

"Into Wood Hall!" Theresa exclaimed in astonishment.

"Yes, and I saw Mr. Harborough; he was ever so kind, not the least like what you would expect—"

And then out came the story of Bill's adventures, a brief and rather incoherent story with some things left out and some told twice, and, naturally, no mention of the surprise in store for the people of Ashelton. That was the only thing she intentionally suppressed, but unintentionally she suppressed many details and most of the conversation, though enough was told to puzzle and disturb Theresa.

"Bill, I don't know what to say. I am sure you ought not to have gone. I wish I had never let you go that walk."

Theresa, completely astonished by Bill's tale, now for the first time realised the responsibility of her charge. The charge herself had no idea of the nature of her offence. "Ought not to have gone?" she said. "Why not?"

"Because—because you ought not. I wonder you did not know; you should have known by instinct."

Theresa's sense of the enormity of

Bill's conduct was increasing, but with it there was also increasing a recognition of the difficulty of making it clear to the offender; certainly if she depended on Bill's instinct she was not likely to be successful, for, as Polly had rightly said, Bill possessed little of that in connection with matters of social behaviour.

"Well, for a moment I did wonder if I ought, because, of course, I had on my old dress and the place is so splendid."

"That is not the reason at all. You ought not to have gone,—I mean, he should not have asked you. He would not have done so if he had been a nice man; he could not have done so properly."

"Oh, yes he did—"

"I mean, he could not have asked you with propriety. You know he cannot think you—did not ask you as an equal; besides, you must have heard about him, the sort of man he is."

"About his being bad? Miss Minchin did say that, and certainly he did say himself that he had the devil's bill to meet."

Bill did not think it wise to explain, in answer to Theresa's exclamation, that she herself had supplied the expression. She let that pass and Theresa began: "If you thought him all that—"

"But I am not sure he is bad exactly; and if he were, I don't see what harm it would do. Besides, is he bad? Of course I shouldn't say he was good in our sense of the word, but then there are so many senses. He gave me the idea of being like a person who had lost his taste for all except one kind of thing. You can't blame a person for not liking strawberry jam when they can only properly taste peppers; I should think, in a way, he could only taste peppers; and I should not be surprised if he had tried them very hot."

"Don't talk nonsense, Bill," Theresa said severely; and Bill, acting on the suggestion, did not talk at all, except when she explained to her cousin that she had promised to go to Wood Hall once again. This Theresa naturally forbade, absolutely refusing to permit it on any condition whatever. Bill did not press the point, nor go into too many details, for, as she said to herself, "Perhaps he won't do it, and then I sha'n't have to go after all." If he did, it would be then time enough to settle with Theresa, and arrange some satisfactory compromise between breaking her own word on the one hand and her cousin's command on the other.

But would he do it? Bill wondered about it once or twice during the week. Would he be able to get a priest to read the service for him? She had a very vague idea as to how he would set about it. He had said something about knowing a man, and had smiled when he said it, not a very nice smile, but it looked rather as if he thought the man would do as he was asked. So Bill wondered, and the week passed quietly.

Sunday came, a still, peaceful spring day. April was fairly in now, every bush and tree was waking to the fact even in the grey weather. Sunday was grey, quiet and calm, but a Sunday long remembered in Ashelton. The congregation assembled in church at the usual time, wearing the usual clothes, for it was not yet Easter. There was nothing much to look at, but from force of habit the congregation looked at each other. Bill, from her corner seat, looked across the old pews to the Harborough chapel. Was he coming? The clock began to strike eleven. No, he was not coming after all, he—was he?—she watched. The small side door of the chapel was opened

from without and into the fretted twilight an old man stepped—he had come!

A great smile of satisfaction spread over Bill's face; a pleasant sensation of excitement and expectancy took possession of her. To tell the truth, something like a thrill of excitement ran through the whole congregation, though they expected nothing, at least nothing definite. Miss Minchin said afterwards that she wondered what was going to happen when she saw him come in, but then the saying came after the event. At the time she certainly looked earnestly enough to have seen anything there was to see, though that did not amount to a great deal. Mr. Harborough, attended by his manservant, entered; the verger, who hastened forward for the purpose, disposed of the servant in a side seat and shut the master in the great front pew. The congregation stared intently; Mr. Harborough stared in return with the vacant stare of a superior being,—they had always said he was very haughty; his eye met Bill's for a moment, and a faint smile of recognition passed over his face, but the general public did not notice it.

The clock had ceased striking, and the first notes of the organ filled the church with a soft vibrating sound. Forth from the new vestry on the right came the choir and clergy; forth from the old vestry on the left, built originally for the sole use of the Harborough chapel, came a priest with shaven face set in a mask of stolid endurance. Bill, with the wanton cruelty of youth, saw the enduring face, but, not recognising its pain, felt no compunction, no pity for the man forced by some threat he feared to a task hateful to him. She felt nothing at all except a thrilling excitement. For a moment the event was all she

had expected. All around her she could feel the mute horror and astonishment of the congregation; she could see it uncontrolled on their faces, so comical, she thought, in their blank, speechless amazement at this unparalleled conduct of the lord of the manor. At the end of the aisle was the verger, motionless, dumb; in their pews, the churchwardens, alike dumb, incapable of action, watching, fascinated, the rival clergy who, owing to the situation of the altar in the Harborough chapel, were hidden from each other's sight by the wooden screen. No one in the chancel knew of those in the chapel; no one in the chapel showed any sign of knowledge of those in the chancel; all knelt in silence. But as the last choir-boy on the right rose from his knees, he leaned a little forward and saw the priest beyond the screen. His eyes grew round with astonishment; he almost fell forward on his head in his eagerness to be quite sure; then the situation struck him as it struck Bill, and doubled him up in spasms of suppressed laughter.

"When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness,"—Mr. Johnson began, at the same time becoming aware of an unusual rustle and movement among the hitherto spell-bound people.

The priest should, no doubt, have begun to read at the same time, but he did not. Mr. Harborough apologised to Bill afterwards for the way in which he failed in his part, for he hesitated and waited a moment. In that moment the verger, a shrewd old brickmaker, hastened up the aisle, and, without waiting for orders from the churchwardens, delivered some whispered information to Mr. Dane.

There was a breathless pause; then low but distinct came the voice of the priest,—"*Introibo ad altare Dei*—"

Miss Minchin started violently and looked about her in an awed fashion. She had seen all that had passed, but she hardly thought, as she said afterwards, that he would really venture to hold a service in the parish church. Mr. Dane passed quietly between the slender pillars of the side screen and approached the priest. A second whispered conversation, a glance, possibly an appealing glance, at Mr. Harborough, and Mr. Dane went on to him. Mr. Johnson, in the absence of the rector, went on with the service, but when Mr. Dane returned to his place he silenced his curate with a glance, and the priest, either more courteous or more sure of a hearing, did not attempt to begin his reading anew.

Mr. Dane turned to the congregation. "My brethren," he said, "our neighbour, Mr. Harborough, has expressed a wish to hear the mass read in his chapel of St. Mary Magdalene.

As the hour he has chosen for the reading coincides with that of our morning-service, and as both cannot be conducted simultaneously in a seemly manner, I ask you to wait with me while the reverend Father reads the mass, which may God bless both to him and his hearers."

No one left the church; to a man they stood by their rector, though there were those among them who had strong feelings and would have much liked to enter a protest. The priest turned back to his mass-book; his hands shook a little, for the rector's words had distressed him curiously; but Mr. Dane composed himself to listen with quiet dignity.

And deep hidden in the shadow of a high old pew was one whose grief and self-abasement knew no bounds. The event had not been what she had anticipated; things looked so very different now.

(To be continued.)

SOME CHILDREN OF THE STATE.

OPINIONS differ widely as to the condition of children in our Poor Law schools. Some of these opinions are based on fact, others on fancy. Even experts are at variance as to the value of the training given in such institutions; while the average man, with a point of view coloured by an early study of Dickens, sees in them nothing good.

Nobody can doubt that Poor Law schools have improved since the days of *Oliver Twist*, thanks to a livelier interest in social questions and a humaner administration of the Poor Law. It is true that they differ widely in different parts of the country; yet, even in the most benighted rural district, where bucolic brains do not aim at a very high standard of training for pauper children, and where education for the poorer classes is still regarded in the light of a dangerous experiment, there is much to be said in their favour. A feeling that children, at any rate, are paupers through no fault of their own is generally prevalent, and their lot has brightened accordingly. In London and our other large towns the managers of Poor Law schools go a step beyond this and are responsible for genuine and often generous efforts to make the schools as efficient as possible, and to give the children a training which shall have some taste of home-life about it, and from which the taint of pauperism shall be as far as possible removed. But even here the schools are, as it were, in the melting-pot, undergoing various processes of change with a view to their betterment, and what the result will be is not yet

clear. A jealous eye is kept on the schools by the authorities on the one hand and by philanthropists on the other; and, from time to time, the public is given the benefit of their observations. Officials of various grades report on the work of the schools and the condition of the inmates as seen through their eyes. Such testimony, however, honest as it may be, is liable to prejudice or shortness of view, and it is not an ill thing that, for once in a while, the children should be allowed to speak for themselves; not directly, of course, for that might be subversive of discipline, but in such a way that side-lights may be thrown upon the administration of our Poor Law schools. What are they taught? How are they being trained, and what do they desire?

Recently the boys and girls in the upper standards of some of the most representative Poor Law schools of London and the neighbourhood were asked to write short essays on "What they would like to be in life, and why." Over eight hundred papers were sent in, and were evidently the candid and untutored expressions of the children's own desires. A careful tabulation of these essays shows the following results. Of four hundred and eight boys, one hundred and fifty-one decided in favour of various handicrafts; one hundred and one wanted to be soldiers, thirty-five farmers, thirty-four sailors, twenty-one engineers, seventeen musicians, ten clerks, five gardeners, three engine-drivers, three firemen, three explorers, three page-boys, two doctors, two

artists, two grocers, two professional cricketers, two waiters, two heroes, while one candidate was found for each of the following careers, a postman, a naval band-boy, a teacher, a secretary to a football-club, a special-correspondent, a gymnastic-instructor, a hunter, a guard, a cook, and a swimmer. Of four hundred and twenty-six girls, two hundred and ninety elected to be domestic servants of one kind or another; forty wanted to be dressmakers, thirty-three nurses, thirty teachers, six missionaries, five laundresses, three nursery-governesses, two milliners, two lady's companions, two post-office clerks, two travellers, two poetesses, one a governess, one a machinist, one a drill-mistress, one a naturalist, one a botanist, one a duchess, one a lady adopting orphans, one to be rich, and one to be useful.

The choice of a calling has been determined in many instances by what the children are taught in the schools. This is particularly so as regards handicrafts among the boys and domestic service among the girls. Musicians, too, (this with the majority means band-boys) come mainly from those schools where the band is a prominent feature. The war in South Africa will in a measure account for the large percentage of aspiring soldiers; many expressions indicate that its progress had been watched in these schools with the keenest eyes, and that the children were well posted as to what was going on. Apart from this, however, there are indications that in many schools soldiering, as a future, is kept prominently before the boys, but there are also a good number of instances where personal reasons are given for such a choice; boys are the sons of soldiers or have relatives in the army, and many specify the particular regiments to which they hope to belong.

Both boys and girls have plenty of

ambition, and there is an evident determination to make the most of whatever calling in life falls to their share. The wisdom of thrift is also appreciated, and often the main reason for the choice of a future calling is that it will insure ample provision for old age, or a sufficient surplus to support a family or assist parents and friends. The need for honesty and truthfulness is much insisted on, and in most of the schools the children are apparently warned against the evils of drink. The girls also speak much of the need for diligent and conscientious service; they must clean out the corners and sweep well under the mats. The boys are much impressed by the need of obedience to authority. Health is greatly desired, and more than one boy asserts that the calling he has chosen will tend to develop his limbs. For instance, a boy who desires to be a postman emphasises the fact that the work will strengthen the muscles of his legs. In one school the boys are much given to choosing what they are pleased to call "clean" trades, and, in another, choice is largely determined by the fact that a calling is not dangerous. Many of the boys are very patriotic. They desire to have a hand in building up the Empire and express great readiness to die for King and Country. There is also among them much anxiety for honours and promotion; they want to do some great deed which shall bring them name and fame.

The girls are less mercenary than the boys; that is to say, they give greater evidence of an altruistic spirit and lay less stress on a desire for good wages. They have much to say concerning the value of religion and the power of influence. Aspiring nurse-maids speak of the good or bad influences which they may bring to bear upon the children committed to their

care, and some of the girls, from the Roman Catholic schools, intimate their intention of seeing that the children are brought up according to the Roman Catholic religion. As a matter-of-fact among the girls, whether the six missionaries, or the nurses who look to point their patients to God, or the dressmakers who see in that calling a greater opportunity for daily devotion and religious meditation, the religious element is strongly marked. Among other things these girls are anxious not to forget their manners; many of them reveal an intense love for children, and most of them look forward to the time when they will have homes of their own. As might be expected, the girls show a wider range of ideas than the boys, and their essays are less bald and conventional. A feeling is also borne in upon one, by a study of these essays, that the girls are trained under a less rigid rule, under a system freer, healthier, and more elastic. Comparing school with school, it is notable that the children in the smallest schools show the greatest range of choice. For example, in one large school three careers sufficed for the whole of the girls, while in some of the small schools there are almost as many careers chosen as there are essayists.

It may be well, however, to see what the children have to say for themselves. With such a mass of material it is difficult to classify, but it is possible in some measure to select. I will take the boys first, leaving the reader to draw his own deductions from the careers chosen and the reasons given for the choice.

One boy, then, would like to be a tailor because it is "a gentlemanly trade." "I could make other people," he writes, "look smart as well as myself." Another having already learned the rudiments of the trade is

of opinion that,—*"There is no one given more appreciation in the world than a good tailor. He is brought into contact with the best Society in the land. My master has been a tailor in the army and he was promoted to master-tailor in 1863. He was twenty-three years tailor and four years cutter-out. He is very kind to me and has given me advice. His chief advice is learn all you can while you are young."*

A shoemaker's craft is selected on the grounds that, *"It does not take much money to start in the business, and there is not much brain-work about it."* Carpentering is chosen by one lad because he thinks it would be nice *"to get a good situation in London mending doors for gentlemen;"* by another because he *"will be able to get work all the year round, and can make some little wooden ornaments which sometimes come in handy for putting on the mantel-piece."* Bakers, we learn, *"are now thought more of than they used to be,"* and are *"at the present time just as healthy as any other people in England."*

Those who aspire to wear a red coat do so, of course, on an infinite variety of grounds. One boy puts in the forefront of his reasons that, *"You do not want to learn when you are young, for they teach you in the army."* A second thinks that the military profession *"may make a man of me. I will obey any command that is given me, be it right or wrong, by the men who are promoted over me. Then if I do my best in everything; keep myself clean, be ready, smart and active, I may, in time, be promoted, too."*

Yet another says: *"A soldier lives not like working men in close shops but in airy tents, and therefore it must be a healthy profession."* This lad's desire for glory is coupled with

an appreciation of the risks which wait upon it: "The worst part of a soldier's life is when he has to go to war, and never knows whether he is going to be killed or not." The following extract suggests a train of thought which it is not very easy to follow: "A soldier, writing to his friends, says, 'I have been firing on the Boers all the day of April 26 and every time I fired I have not been wasting government ammunition, but the Boer ammunition which I found on a dead Boer.' So I can well see that the British soldiers do not care to waste British ammunition on Boers."

A boy who wants to be a gardener is impressed with the need of adequate knowledge in his work. "A gardener," he writes, "must be careful. He has to know all the names of the plants, and if he does not remember them he will get into a muddle."

A boy, in a Roman Catholic school, who wants to be a farmer, says: "Of the money I earn I will put some in the bank, and with the rest I will buy clothing and pay the rent. I will be able to go to Mass on Sunday and get my horse out in the afternoon and go and see some of my friends." Another with the same aspirations, but of a less religious bent, writes: "You have a horse and cart and you can ride out on Sunday and have a good day of it." A third would like to try his luck as a farmer in Canada. "I would like to go to Canada. Farmers who go there generally take dogs with them in case of rats. Men who work underground generally don't live long after forty, while men who work out in the fresh air nearly always live long lives. If you go to the Derby races you will see fine horses that come from Ireland. The farmers in Ireland are generally big strong fellows, while in England they are not quite so big."

Here is a curious extract from the essay of a boy who wants to be a waiter. "I would like to be a waiter in a restaurant. A waiter has to be a very smart man. A waiter's job is a very fine one. He has got to get the dinner ready for men who are waiting for it. A waiter has not got many hours a day to work. They have very good pay and get plenty of tips. A waiter stops work about four o'clock in the afternoon. A waiter has a long time to eat dinner, lunch, and tea. A waiter has a tail coat and a front."

Many of the boys express a desire to be able to help their parents. One with a taste for shoemaking, says: "When my parents are old I may work for them. I may be able to make boots and shoes for them, so that they will not have to buy them but keep their money for food and clothing."

As an instance of the boys who want "clean" trades, we may take the following. "I would like to be a carpenter," says the writer, "because it is very nice to work with a clean apron on and respectable clothes, and also clean flesh."

Of patriotic feeling there are many examples. Here are two. "England needs many soldiers, for but for such people England would not be in its present position at the head of the world." A boy who wants to be a bandsman writes: "Three hundred of our school went to the Royal Military Tournament to see the soldiers drill. We saw the POWERFUL men with their 4.7 guns and a team of the R.H.A. This made me wish I was one of them and I hope to be so some day." Many of the boys are proud of their teachers or of their schools. This is the way in which a boy who wants to be a musician speaks of the school-bandmaster. "Our bandmaster started when quite

a little boy and taught himself. He was not the son of a bandmaster like most great musicians are, but he is now one of the greatest musicians of the present day."

Take again three instances of the way in which these boys weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the callings they select. One, wishing to be a baker, says: "I am not big enough to be a soldier or a sailor, and the work of a baker is clean, healthy, and not dangerous. Of course one runs the risk of catching cold, coming out of the warm bakehouses into the cold air, but with a little care there is not much to fear." The next, desiring to be a tailor, writes: "With a needle, a few yards of cloth, and some thread I could soon start work as a tailor. I have often made a few little odds and ends, and the trade of a tailor would suit me well when I grow up to be a man. It is an indoor life, a very cool job, very clean, and not much danger, and there is not much standing. Tailors require a lot of education. The great evil among tailors is drunkenness, but I have signed the pledge already. I would get ever so many more customers than drunkards." The third boy gives his preference for a military life. "I would rather be a soldier than an ordinary workman, because you are taught in the army to obey orders. No matter what the General's order may be it has to be carried out; willing or not willing it has to be done. To obey orders is one of the best things you can do. There is another reason why I should like to be a soldier, that is, you can get into the army easily, and very often it takes a good deal of trouble to get a good trade. When any people see a soldier they ought to be proud of him, for they must remember that the soldiers and sailors defend their country."

Of the way in which the boys appreciate the need for making provision against sickness and old age, the following are striking examples; the second is especially notable. The first, who would be a soldier, gives as his reason, "I shall get a pension and be able to end my days in an honourable way." The second, a boy who wants to be an engineer, concludes his essay in this way: "The work may be dangerous and dirty, but it is honest, necessary, and responsible. Engineers have good pay, and although they may have long hours that will soon be put right, for workmen are now trying to get an eight hours day. Supposing a pipe burst and I were badly injured, I could claim money from my employers and spend the rest of my life without working." The third boy, who also desires to be an engineer, writes: "I should like to be an engineer, as I might earn a good living by it and there is not much fear of going into the workhouse if I work hard and work with a will. But if I spend all my money in the publichouse, instead of saving it for later on when I may be out of work or cannot work through old age, then I will have to go into the workhouse or die of starvation. But there would be none of that if I had saved my money for old age, or when I am out of work. If I have a house of my own and the gas-pipe breaks, or the gas leaks out of some joint or plug, I know exactly what to do. If I have the proper tools I can do it myself, instead of having my house blown up and perhaps be killed myself."

There is no lack of ambition among these workhouse lads. Many of them have great ideas of what they will be able to rise to with honesty, industry, and perseverance. "I would learn languages," writes one boy who wants to be a clerk, "in case I might be an

ambassador or statesman of my own country. I have a longing to read other books which are not in my own language. It is very nice to be a clerk and rise to be a great man in your own country, and after your death to be honoured yourself, and your family ever afterwards to be proud of having a son who knew how to support them and his dearly-loved country." Another boy's ambition is of a less soaring kind. "It is an indoor life," he writes of a tailor's, "cool and a sitting down trade, and I may become a tailor of Royalty."

Of the girls' essays, I will now give some extracts from a few of the most striking. A girl, who wants to be a laundrymaid, writes: "I have been reading about Martha Crossley in our reading-books, and I hope to prosper like her. She began life as a servant and as she was so frugal and careful with her money by degrees she became a rich woman. I do not mean to say I want to be rich, but I want to be prosperous."

"God first made gardens and gardening seems one of the purest of human pleasures," writes the girl who wishes to be a botanist. Another from the same school, chooses the career of a naturalist on these grounds: "I want to find out all about animals. We ought to make their life in this world happy, for so far as we know they have no life in the world to come." An embryo teacher writes thus of her future pupils: "I would not only cultivate their minds to do things that are grand and clever, but help them to form their characters, which is not an easy thing to do, and help them to correct their faults, especially lying and deceit."

An extract from the essay of a girl of fifteen who wants to be a nurse shows something of the formative influences at work in the lives of these

children. Relating her visit to a hospital she says: "I liked the ward where the children were the best. The sisters spoke so lovingly to the little sufferers and they looked up and smiled as if they were grateful for the kindness shown them. There is a beautiful picture, 'The Roll Call,' in our schoolroom, and I never pass it by without thinking of our brave wounded soldiers in South Africa, and wishing I was old enough to go and help nurse them like Florence Nightingale in the Crimean War."

It is a girl in a Roman Catholic school who, desiring to be a dressmaker, writes: "It is a very quiet and respectable trade but not very healthy. As a dressmaker I would only need two dresses as I could mend them and they would last me so long. And besides we should be able to think of the good God more often and have not distractions. I should very much like my master and mistress to be Catholics as I would be able to go to Mass on Sundays and holidays of Obligation and fulfil my Easter duties more easily. I would be able to help my mother a great deal, and we would be so charitable as to mend any poor creature's clothes that are torn."

Another Roman Catholic girl, who wants to be a nursemaid, sees in that calling an opportunity for wielding a considerable religious influence. Her essay runs as follows. "When I grow up I shall have to earn my own living, so I think I should like to be a nursemaid, and I have my reasons for saying this. For instance, I could get the child to be baptised, and then I could bring the child up and teach it to love and serve God, and if the child happened to get very ill I could take it to a hospital and see that it was among Catholic people; and if it was to die I am nearly sure the child would go to Heaven and God would

reward me for bringing up the child, and perhaps after a few years God would send me another little child and I could also teach it the same, and if it was a little boy I could send it to a Catholic school and get it to learn how to serve Holy Mass, and if it lived to be older I could try and get it to be made a priest, and if I was to go and hear Mass said by him I am sure I would be delighted to think that I had the pleasure of bringing up that priest when he was a little boy, and I am sure he would be grateful to me. And another reason why I should like to be a nursemaid is because I like children, for they are so innocent and I don't think there is anything nicer than to deal with an innocent child; and I could correct her faults and help her to grow up good and honourable and it would also be a great credit to her family."

To be a duchess may seem a strange choice to come from a girl in a Poor Law school, but that it is not a wholly selfish ambition will be seen from the following short paper, the writer of which is only eleven years old. "When I am grown up I hope to become a Duchess and in due time a useful woman, and I should help to rule the country and govern the people. I should be able to be kind to little children and help them in different ways. If a child was ill I should be able to send her to the hospital and pay all the money until she was better. If some children were hungry I would give

them some money to buy food, and I should take them to a good school and have them well educated, and when they got older I should be able to get them a nice situation."

Finally, here is the essay of a little lass of twelve who aspires to be a poet and a novelist. "Although I am still young my greatest wish is to be a poetess or a novelist, but I do not know if I shall ever change my mind and want to be something else. One must be a good grammarian and learn to keep the manuscript all in the same tense, learn where to put the stops, and learn how to express one's thoughts clearly. Being a novelist or a poet is a chance living, because every book will not bring money and you may gain or you may lose by it. I should like to be a poetess because it is a very favourite pastime of mine to make up bits of poetry." Then follows an example of the young essayist's versification.

These are but a few of many curious and striking illustrations of the vast difference between the system of training now carried on in these schools and that which was in vogue half a century ago. With such ingenuous evidence before us it is not difficult to believe that the children in these Poor Law schools are, at all events, not deficient in ideas, and that they are being carefully and kindly trained to lead good and useful lives.

W. H. HUNT.

ANCIENT PISTOL.

"GOT ~~you~~ you, Ancient Pistol!" We are most of us, I think, inclined to echo Fluellen's blessing, while refraining from its base addition. We have a sneaking affection for Ancient Pistol, and have no wish to revile one who has amused us so royally.

A great many people must have listened to the Ancient's swelling words lately, as Mr. Mollison rolled them out in *HENRY THE FIFTH* and Mr. Asche in *THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR*. One need not stay to compare the two performances; both were admirable, and it was assuredly no fault of either player, if the spectator, who was perhaps a little rusty in his Shakespeare, left the theatre with the feeling that, while he had been vastly diverted by the Ancient, the character yet remained to him somewhat of a mystery. Was there ever such a man as this Pistol, this Prince of Swaggerers? Is he possible as a contemporary of Prince Hal and Poins? And where did he acquire that strange jargon of his, his "red-lattice phrases," his "bold beating oaths"?

Before attempting to answer these questions let us gather up into a story all the incidents of his career. Shakespeare had a liking for this "base Assyrian knight," as Falstaff somewhere calls him, answering Pistol according to his folly. He would never otherwise have brought him into no less than three of the dramas; into the second part of *HENRY THE FOURTH*, into *THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR*, and into *HENRY THE FIFTH*.

Pistol is a soldier of fortune, one

of the train of Sir John Falstaff. His rank is doubtful; he is commonly addressed as Ancient, that is, Ensign; but he is sometimes Lieutenant Pistol, sometimes Captain. Commentators attribute this variety to negligence on the poet's part. More probably Shakespeare would have us infer from it that any rank bestowed upon him was, in fact, honorary. His right to any one of the three titles was, to say the least, questionable. Falstaff, in his anger, puts him on a level with Corporal Nym: "You and your coach-fellow Nym," he says. And Mistress Dorothy tells him plainly he has no right to the badge upon his shoulder. "An captains were of my mind," she says, "they would truncheon you out, for taking their names upon you before you had earned them. You a captain, you slave, for what? . . . He a captain! hang him, rogue!" Gower too, that stern soldier, speaks his mind as fully, if more soberly. "Why, 'tis a gull, a fool, a rogue, that now and then goes to the wars, to grace himself at his return into London under the form of a soldier,"—with much more to the same purpose, until our poor Ancient's reputation grows as threadbare as his doublet.

It appears that Pistol had at least the virtue of fidelity to his master. True, he is not found among the marauders on Gad's Hill. Perhaps Falstaff doubted his discretion, for Pistol had not the gift of silence. But it is he who rides helter-skelter into Gloucestershire to inform his master of Prince Hal's accession, which was to be a source of honour to

the Knight, as they fondly hoped. Such services as this Falstaff repaid by his protection in certain transactions in which his henchman was involved. When Master Abraham Slender accused Pistol of robbery, the latter met the charge with a flat denial.

Word of denial in thy labras here !

Word of denial : froth and scum, thou liest !

And Sir John countenanced Pistol with entire equanimity ; whereupon Slender withdrew the charge, wisely determining that he would "ne'er be drunk again, but in honest, civil, godly company." Again, there was the affair of Mistress Bridget's fan. The handle of it was missing, and Falstaff swore upon his honour that Pistol had it not. Nay, he had imperilled his soul, he declares, by "swearing to gentlemen my friends you were good soldiers and tall fellows." Master and man parted company for a time, but when Falstaff was committed to prison by his former boon companion, Pistol shared his captivity, and not, it seems, without good reason. "The man is dead," says the Beadle, "that you and Pistol beat amongst you." They are both at large when next we hear of them. Perhaps the new King relented towards the Knight and, at his intercession, included Pistol in the amnesty.

Nor was it in any censorious spirit but from the need for retrenchment that Falstaff discarded, for a time at any rate, his followers. The severance was quickened by the refusal of Nym and Pistol to bear his letters to Mistress Ford and Mistress Page. In this refusal they stand upon their honour. Perhaps, however, rations had grown scanty in the Knight's service, for Pistol's subsequent attempt to borrow money from his patron fails to extract a single penny. Nor need

we sympathise with his failure, even though he had shared with Falstaff over Mistress Bridget's fan. For he and Nym had vowed to revenge their dismissal upon the Knight, and looked to make money out of him by betraying his schemes to Ford and Page. There were, in short, faults on both sides.

Shortly after the death of Henry the Fourth Pistol seems to have thought it was time he settled down, and with that intent married Mistress Quickly, hostess of the Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap. The marriage was like to have caused a fight between the Ancient and Corporal Nym. The dame, it seems, was plighted to the latter, but Pistol's high-flown talk, we must suppose, prevailed over the sententious brevity of the Corporal. It was only at Bardolph's instance that the two consented to be reconciled.

Meanwhile Sir John Falstaff lay sick within the tavern. The King, as the hostess said, had killed his heart, and he shortly died. His roguish followers forgot old scores, and mourned him sincerely, each according to his kind. One cannot at any rate doubt the genuineness of Bardolph's grief : "Would I were with him, wheresome'er he is, either in heaven or in hell !" A better man than Sir John might be proud to win such an epitaph even from no better man than poor Bardolph. The times, however, were stirring, the invasion of France was imminent. Pistol, finding himself, it may be, a little tired of domesticity, determined, like a true soldier of fortune, to have his share of the spoil. The three worthies bade adieu to "the quondam Quickly," and set off for France as sworn brothers. It cannot be said that at the siege of Harfleur they covered themselves with glory. Bardolph's career, moreover, was prematurely cut

short, for, being convicted of stealing a pyx, he was hanged without ceremony, Pistol's appeal notwithstanding. For sharing in this sacrilege, or for some similar offence, Nym was also executed. Meanwhile, Harfleur had fallen, and Pistol, prompted by some sudden whim of valour, had done yeoman service in helping keep the bridge over the little river Ternois at Blangi. If any think that he was consistently a coward, let them remark Fluellen's words: "He is a man of no estimation in the 'orld; but I did see him do gallant service." How the same man who bore himself so bravely at the bridge could allow himself to be cudgelled later on by the fiery Welshman is a matter hard, if not impossible, to explain. But let us remember that on one occasion, at least, Pistol played the man. There is no getting over the Welshman's tribute.

But alas for our valiant Ancient! His valour speedily cooled. Incensed with Fluellen for refusing to use his influence with the Duke of Exeter on Bardolph's behalf, he insulted the emblem sported by Fluellen on St. David's day. He brought the choleric captain bread and salt, and bade him eat his leek, thus mocking at "an ancient tradition, begun upon an honourable respect, and worn as a memorable trophy of predeceased valour." For at Poitiers, if Fluellen may be believed,—and antiquarians are divided on the origin of the custom—"the Welshmen did good service in a garden where leeks did grow, wearing leeks in their Monmouth caps: which to this hour is an honourable badge of the service." The moment when this insult was offered was unsuited for contention, but Fluellen bided his time, and, when he found it, bade Pistol eat the leek that he had derided. Pistol's courage appears to have wholly evaporated; he ate

the leek, with a rain of blows for sauce, without offering the least show of resistance. This is our last glimpse of him. The news has reached him, he tells us in soliloquy, that his wife, "his Nell," is dead; and, for himself,

Old do I wax: and from my weary
limbs
Honour is cudgelled.

He can ensconce himself no longer under the shelter of his honour; and so, for England, there to live by very dubious courses. Yet at his exit one feels inclined to say, as Prince Henry said of his master, "I could have better spared a better man." So powerful is the magic of Shakespeare, who makes us regret parting even with his rascals.

"I know no character in Shakespeare's plays," said Coleridge, "(unless indeed Pistol be an exception) which can be called the mere portrait of an individual." Accepting this theory of Pistol's origin, how far are this individual and his bombastic talk in keeping with the era of Agincourt?

We may answer at once that such a man is as probable in that age as in any other. The braggart swashbuckler is a canker incident to the profession of arms in every age. But his language is a jargon which no one in the days of the fourth and fifth Henrys could conceivably have used. Shakespeare knew this perfectly well, but was no slave to historical accuracy. The style of talk that doubtless amused the audience in the Globe Theatre on the Bankside as much as it amuses us to-day would have been unintelligible to the real Prince Hal and his companions. For Pistol talks a playhouse jargon, in a time when no playhouse existed. The mystery-plays of the fifteenth century were not the storehouse upon which he drew. His Pistolese (as it has been termed) is

liberally sprinkled with quotations and misquotations from Shakespeare's immediate predecessors in the playwright's art. And, if we adopt Coleridge's view, there is no objection to supposing that the poet may have known Pistol in the flesh, and may have talked at the Mermaid or elsewhere with this out-at-elbows adventurer, this hanger-on at the theatres, who loved to season his conversation with tags from his favourite authors. But, be this as it may, it is quite certain that Shakespeare in the mouth of Pistol deliberately intended to ridicule the absurdly bombastic style of previous dramatists.

Let us remember that, beyond a natural desire to improve the public taste by this ridicule, he had some excuse for lampooning the earlier school. They had said many hard things about him on his first coming among them. Greene accused him of plagiarism; it was in the matter of the three parts of *HENRY THE SIXTH*, the original draft of which, according to some, was produced by Greene and Peele. There was talk of "an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers," of a "Tyger's heart wrapt in a player's hide." When we think of these attacks, Shakespeare's revenge seems moderate enough. Even Marlowe, to whom only of his predecessors in tragedy it is said that Shakespeare was indebted, and with whom he may have collaborated in the revision of *HENRY THE SIXTH*, was not free from the faults of bombast and bad taste. Indeed he is among the first to fall, by the mouth of Pistol, under the poet's censure. It is Marlowe and Peele who are parodied by Pistol on his first appearance. The passage so well illustrates Shakespeare's method that it is worth quoting in full, and also as a specimen of many others. The scene is the Boar's Head, and Pistol has not been received according to his liking.

Page. Pray thee, go down

Pist. I'll see her damned first; to Pluto's damned lake, by this hand, to the infernal deep, with Erebus and tortures vile also. Hold hook and line, say I. Down, down dogs! down, faitors! Have we not Hiren here?

Host. Good Captain Peesel, be quiet; 'tis very late, i' faith: I beseech you now, aggravate your choler.

Pist. These be good humours, indeed!

Shall pack-horses,
And hollow pamp'rd jades of Asia,
Which cannot go but thirty mile a-day,
Compare with Cæsars, and with Cannibals,
And Trojan Greeks? Nay, rather
damn them with
King Cerberus; and let the welkin
roar.

Shall we fall foul for toys?

Host. By my troth, captain, these are very bitter words.

In Pistol's first speech he parodies Peele's *BATTLE OF ALCAZAR*, in his second a well-known passage from Marlowe's *TAMBURLAINE*, where Tamburlaine harnesses to his chariot the kings whom he has conquered, "the pampered jades of Asia," who, he complains, "can draw but twenty miles a day." These, then, were topical allusions to Shakespeare's auditors. It is hardly necessary to say that Pistol's *Cannibals* are *Hannibals* in the original.

Later, as if to atone for seeming unkindness to a dead friend, Shakespeare introduces in *THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR* a stanza from Marlowe's pretty song *THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE*; and in *AS YOU LIKE IT* he quotes a beautiful line from *HERO AND LEANDER*:

Dead shepherd, now I find thy saw of
might:
Who ever loved, that loved not at first
sight?

Thus launched on his career of misquotation, Pistol maintains it to the end. Some of his most telling utterances can be traced to an earlier

source. "Base is the slave that pays," says Pistol. "My motto," wrote Heywood in one of his INTERLUDES, "shall be, base is the man that pays." His every remark is tinged with the mockery of bombast. A stilted style is wearisome, but a parody of it may be delightful; it is not so much what the Ancient says that moves our laughter, as the way in which he expresses it. Shakespeare, who designed him in the first instance as a lash for the fustian of others, surely came to love the character for its very affectations. "'Convey' the wise it call. 'Steal!' foh! a fico for the phrase!"—"Why, then, the world's mine oyster, which I with sword will open."—"Give me thy fist, thy fore-foot give to me: Thy spirits are most tall."—There is no resisting such a phrase-maker as this. And how laughable is that misconception of Nym's Latin!

Nym. Will you shog off? I would have you *solus*.

Pist. Solus, egregious dog? O viper vile!
The *solus* in thy most mervailous face;
The *solus* in thy teeth, and in thy throat,
And in thy hateful lungs, yea, in thy maw, perdy,
And, which is worse, within thy nasty mouth!
I do retort the *solus* in thy bowels.

This is near the language of exorcism. So, at least, Nym takes it. "I am not Barbason," he says: "you cannot conjure me."

But, in truth, Pistol's bark was worse than his bite, as is the way with most of his kind. He was loyal, in the main, to his associates; once in his life he was a real soldier; he showed some feeling at Falstaff's death. For these glimpses of virtue, and above all for his inimitable style, let us overlook what is less admirable in him, and let us end, as we began, with a blessing on the head of Ancient Pistol.

H. C. MINCHIN.

OUT-PATIENTS.

(A SKETCH IN A HOSPITAL.)

It is two o'clock on the out-patients' afternoon, and the hall of the hospital in which they assemble is already fairly well filled with women and children; men are not treated here. Some thirty thousand of them enter these doors in the course of the year, passing in turn into the consulting-room, where high ability and wide experience are at their service, thence through another door to the dispensary where the prescriptions are made up, and down a passage into the street again. The number of patients is large and the time allotted to them is relatively very short indeed; but this is not a consideration which has much weight with the majority of the visitors who are chatting sociably in the waiting-room. As the clock strikes, the nurse on duty ushers the first comer into the consulting-room. She advances with a cheerful smile towards the doctor, dragging the little patient behind her.

"Well, what's the matter?"

"Well really, doctor," says the patient's mother, "I don't rightly know what's the matter with 'im but 'e's downright bodily ill,—bodily ill."

"Well, but what do you notice wrong with him yourself?"

"I 'ardly know, doctor. My young man, 'e says to me,—'e just got a bit o' work yesterday, 'e did, 'e's a labourer at the docks—an' as I was sayin', 'e just come 'ome from 'is work larst night an' 'e says, 'W'y, Missus, what's the matter with the kid?' An' I says to 'im, 'W'y, yer do frighten me—"

"Yes, yes," says the doctor, "but what I want to know is, what do you notice wrong about the child?"

"But that's what I'm just tellin' yer, doctor," the woman answers, a little injured by the interruption. "When my young man says to me 'W'y what's the matter with the kid,' I tell yer I was that scared I began to feel queer all over. I do suffer from the 'eart, doctor, an' 'ave done for years, an' when my young man—"

"Look here, Missis," the doctor interposes; "if you can't tell me what's the matter with the child you must go outside and wait."

The woman ignores this suggestion. "Yer see, doctor," she pursues, "I carn't 'elp feelin' anxious about 'im. 'Tain't as if I 'ad a lot; I never 'ad but three, an' buried two of 'em with the fever, which they was taken to Homerton an' me livin' down at Deptford, it was a terrible long way to get to see 'em; an' so when my young—"

"Look here, my good woman," says the doctor decisively, "you go and sit on that chair over there, and when you've made up your mind what's the matter with the child, you can come back. Next one, please, nurse."

The next one comes in carrying a baby in her arms and leading a little girl of five or six.

"And what's the matter with you, Polly?" says the doctor.

"Oh it ain't 'er, it's the baby, doctor. She's got a corf."

"A cough?"

"Yes; a narsty, 'ackin' corf."

The doctor wishes to examine the patient's chest and the woman lays the baby flat on its face, undoes several knots, and removes a series of small garments, but is finally checked by a knot which only becomes tighter for her efforts to untie it. She tackles it vigorously with tooth and nail, while the baby howls dismally. Growing desperate, she breaks the string and discovers to her dismay that this is not the last line of defence. Underneath the little jacket is a piece of flannel sewn firmly round the body. With this she wrestles silently and at last the nurse offers a pair of scissors.

"How long has she had the cough?"

"It ain't a she; it's a boy."

"Well, how long has he had the cough?"

"Oh, 'e's 'ad it a long time."

"What do you call a long time? A week?"

"Oh, more'n a week, doctor."

"A year?"

"Oh no, 'e ain't 'ad it a year."

"About a month?"

"Well," in a burst of candour, "I really dunno, doctor; you see it ain't my child, it's my sister's child. That's 'ow I was so long undressin' of 'im."

"But why is your sister not here?"

"She's that nervous," the deputy explains apologetically, "an' so I says as 'ow I'll take 'im myself. She's a-sittin' outside, she is."

The case is quickly treated and the conversation with the first lady resumed.

"Well, Missis, have you settled why you brought the child?"

She has; during the interval she has recalled the symptoms and is able to describe them with a wealth of picturesque detail.

"I think myself 'e's got a touch of the croup," she says confidently. "'E's so wheezy on 'is little chest, an'

'e gets that convulsed of nights as you dunno whether 'e's dead or alive; an' 'is little spine do rattle so, that we don't get no sleep. Sometimes 'e burns like a little coal, you carn't 'ardly abear 'im in bed wi' you, 'e's that 'ot; an' sometimes 'e perspires like a bloomin' pond, an'—"

"My good woman," says the doctor irritably, with his ear to the child's chest, "how do you suppose I can hear anything while you keep on talking?"

"Beg pardon, I'm sure, doctor," says the mother much aggrieved by this unjust reproach; "but I thought as 'ow you'd arsked me wot was the matter with 'im."

She disappears, injured but not unforgiving, prescription in hand through the second door into the dispensary.

The next patient was evidently seriously ill.

"You must leave the child here," the doctor says. "She has inflammation of the lungs."

"Leave 'er 'ere,—in the 'orspital? Oh my gracious!" says the mother, much agitated by the suggestion. "Oh, I don't see as I can do that, doctor. I lef' 'er 'ere once before an' they turned 'er out more dead'n alive. An' then there was 'er boots,—she come in with a good pair o' boots on 'er feet, an' I never saw 'em no more."

"And you think we stole them?" says the doctor.

"I don't go so fur as to say *stole*," says the mother darkly; "all I says is she 'ad a good pair of boots on 'er feet when she went in, an' I never seen 'em since. It ain't fur *me* to say 'oo's wearin' them boots now, but I don't 'ardly like to leave 'er 'ere agen."

"You must do as you like," says the doctor shortly; "but if you take her out, you will kill her;" and influenced either by this warning or by the fact that the boots the child is

now wearing are hardly good enough to seduce either doctors or nurses from the path of honesty, she acquiesces reluctantly.

Her successor is a Polish Jewess who had come in two days previously, speaking no English but armed with a piece of paper on which some friend had written an account of the illness. "Had Measuls, now got no Measuls, have a Corf, tissicky Corf," ran the document, but it did not shed enough light on the case, and the doctor had sent her away with a piece of paper on which he had written, "Some one who speaks English must come with the patient to-morrow." She has now returned, with a companion.

"Ask her what's the matter," says the doctor.

The interpreter turns to the patient and repeats, "Doctor says, what's the matter?" The Jewess shakes her head. "Doctor says, what's the matter?" repeats the interpreter very loudly. The Jewess patiently shakes her head again. The interpreter puts her lips to her friend's ear and screams at the top of her voice, "Doctor says, what's the matter?"

"Why don't you say it in Polish?" asks the doctor.

"Oh, I dunno no Polish," says the interpreter much surprised.

"But what have you come for then?"

"I dunno, sir," says the interpreter; "but you said on her paper as 'ow you wanted someun 'oo could speak English. But she don't understand no English, she don't," she adds with a pitying glance at her companion; "she's a furriner, pore thing."

The mother of the next patient is also a Jewess who professes to be able to talk English. In reply to the opening question, "What is the matter?" she replies readily, "I not know; he is seek."

"Does he cough?"

"Whaat?"

"Does he cough,—*husten*, you know. Don't you talk German?"

"No, he not *husten*," she answers, "he is seek."

"Does he take his food?"

"Whaat?"

"Does he eat?—*essen*," says the doctor rapidly champing an imaginary meal. The woman looks at him, faintly interested in his pantomime and repeats despondently that the child is "seek."

"You don't understand German? Yes, all right, I know he is seek. Oh, you've got a friend outside? Let's have her in, then."

The friend appears and a long and animated conversation in Yiddish follows accompanied by expressive gesticulations; then the newcomer turns to the doctor and smilingly gives him the gist of the dialogue.

"Zis chile, he is seek."

"So I have heard already," says the doctor coldly; "if you can't tell me anything more than that—"

"He is seek all over," the linguist continues impressively. "He not eat, he not sleep, he all fire." She stops short dramatically.

"Yes?" says the doctor encouragingly. But there is no response; the history of the case is at an end.

The next child is a sadly emaciated infant of five months. "'E don't put on no flesh, doctor; 'e's awastin' away to a shadder, that's what 'e's doin', pore little angel. 'Is chest do sound 'oller, don't it, doctor? That's 'cos 'e ain't 'ad 'is tea."

"What are you giving him in the way of food?"

"Oh, 'e 'as a bit of what's goin', same as we do; 'e's wonderful 'earty at 'is food."

"But what sort of food?" asks the doctor contemplating the tiny wrinkled haggard face of the hearty eater. "Cheese?"

"No, 'e don't 'ave much cheese; 'e don't like it."

"Tea?"

"Yes, 'e 'as a tidy drop of tea."

"Beer?"

"No, 'e don't often 'ave no beer; 'is father gives 'im a drop now an' agen."

"He doesn't have any milk, I suppose?" asks the doctor sarcastically.

"He do 'ave some milk, doctor, but 'e don't care for it without there's tea in it. I dunno what 'e'd do if we was to stop 'is tea."

She is followed by an anxious little girl with a baby in her arms and a mite of three hanging on to her scanty skirts. "Please, doctor, I dunno what ter do with the baby; 'e keeps on a-ollerin'."

"Why didn't your mother bring him?" asks the doctor.

"We ain't got no muvver, sir."

"Who looks after you all, then?"

"There ain't no one but me, sir; I looks after 'em;" and the baby's clean well-cared for condition testifies eloquently to her success.

"Well, Polly, you say that baby's always crying; what are you giving him?"

"I did giv' 'im cow's milk but it only made 'im 'oller more, sir, so I'm tryin' Nestle's milk wich a lady downstairs give me, and a hegg of a mornin' sometimes; but 'e don't seem satisfied, and 'ollers so of a night father don't get no sleep."

"Look here, Polly, you go home and ask your father if you may leave him in the hospital; that would be the best thing for him."

The child hesitates. "Very well," she says reluctantly after a doubtful pause. "But I may come an' see 'im in the orspital, mayn't I, sir? cos 'e's my bruvver, and 'e's a nice baby."

"Of course you can; and by the way, how old are you?"

The baby's careworn guardian was nine last birthday.

The next interview is extremely brief and somewhat stormy. A woman hurries in determined to leave her child in the hospital, but unfortunately for her convenience it is not ill enough to justify its admission. She tries persuasion and coaxing in vain and finally sweeps out of the room with a shrill *crescendo* of taunt and denunciation. "Call yerselves a 'orspital!" is her parting volley as she slams the door behind her. "I calls yer a set of bloomin' murderers!"

The out-patient department is open only at stated hours, but the casualty-room, where the house-surgeon sees minor ailments, is never closed. The accident-bell rings frequently enough, but there is never a great stream of patients waiting to pour in, and consequently a more leisurely air prevails. Here are two children aged eight and three; the elder child explains that her little sister, Sally, has swallowed a farthing; at least the coin has disappeared mysteriously while in Sally's possession and they are naturally anxious to recover it; the consequence to Sally's digestive arrangements is evidently of only secondary importance. An emetic is administered and the little patient sits demurely on the edge of the sofa with her hands folded on her lap, awaiting events, observing doctor and nurses solemnly with her large grey eyes. After a due interval another dose is given, but still no result follows. Various devices are tried but without success; in defiance of all contrivances for making a child sick, the little maiden sits unconcernedly on the sofa, her hands still calmly folded, gently swinging her toes. But the elder child's patience is at last exhausted. With a series of violent thumps on her sister's spine, she shouts: "Sick it up, Sally, carn't yer? Sick it up

at once, silly; we won't get no tea if yer don't."

The method is unprofessional but efficacious; and the next moment a wild-eyed three-year-old has "sicked up" the missing coin.

The little girls go home to tea and are succeeded by an individual in baggy trousers several sizes too large for him, a coat that reaches down to his ankles, and an enormous pair of boots in which he shuffles along with considerable difficulty. The quiet deferential tone in which he speaks would do credit to a butler in Berkeley Square, but his accent is unmistakably of the East. His age he states is ten.

"Where do you live?" asks the nurse with the register.

"Loimce, Miss," he answers politely.

"Loimce?" repeats the nurse, a new arrival at the hospital. "How do you spell it?"

A shade of embarrassment crosses his face at this disconcerting question but he is not unequal to it. "Oi just spells it Loimce, Miss, when oi writes it."

"L-O-I-M-C-E?" suggests the nurse.

"Yes, Miss, that's roight; you've got 'im on the boko."

"Got what?" asks the nurse puzzled.

The boy looks round somewhat wearily, as if asking what is the use of talking to such uninformed people as this.

"He means Limehouse, Nurse," says the doctor.

"Thanks, guvner," says the boy, infinitely relieved at finding someone at hand who is evidently not without glimmerings of intelligence. "And what's the matter with you, sonny?" the doctor continues. "Why, who did this?" It is a nasty knife-wound in the arm.

"A bloke, guvner."

"What were you doing to the bloke?" asks the doctor as he washes the wound.

"Nothink, guvner."

"But you must have been doing something."

"No, guvner, oi ain't touched 'im," he declares earnestly.

But the doctor notes the singular discrepancy between the size of the boy and the size of his boots. "Are those your father's boots?" he enquires with apparent irrelevance.

"No, guvner; 'e ain't got none."

"Where did you get them, Johnny?"

"From a bloke."

"The bloke that knifed you?"

Johnny hesitates a moment and then nods assent.

"Drunk?" asks the doctor busy with his bandages.

"Corse not, guvner," answers the patient. "'E wouldn't 'ave got me if 'e'd been drunk, only a bit on, 'e was. Yer see 'e 'ad the kickers under 'is arm, and oi thought 'e was all roight, so oi pinched [stole] 'em and 'e knifed me."

"You must come up to-morrow and get it dressed," says the doctor, and the boy shuffles away. The doctor glancing out of the window after him, observes that he slips off the boots, making his way discreetly and warily barefoot down the street, lest by any chance the "bloke" should be lying in ambush.

There is an interval of silence; then a sudden peal at the accident-bell is heard, and the next moment an agitated parent is seen running down the passage with a child tucked under her arm, its bare legs streaming behind it in the wind of its mother's rapidity.

"What's the matter, Missis? Has she swallowed some poison?"

"No, sir, it ain't that," she pants; "but I'm that scared, I don't know 'ardly which way to turn."

"Well, but what's happened? Has she hurt herself?"

"No, sir; and 'er father 'e's that upset 'e couldn't do nothink, else I ain't used to running like that, and 'e'd 'ave brought 'er up, but he says as 'ow 'e daren't touch 'er, and I've run all the way, an' me 'eart—"

"Come now, Missis, just tell me quietly what's the matter with the child."

The patient, a pretty little thing of four, looks enquiringly at her alarmed parent; there seems to be little the matter with her.

"It's all very well yer a-sittin' there and a-tellin' of me to be quiet," cries her mother; "if yer 'ad any children of yer own, yer wouldn't like

ter see 'em die afore yer eyes, oh dear, oh dear, and there ain't only two more and the baby."

The doctor in despair examines the little girl, but fails to discover anything wrong. "Now look here," says he firmly; "I can't find anything the matter with your child, so you'll have to go away unless you tell me why you brought her up to the hospital."

"Well, doctor, we was all a-havin' our tea a minute ago as it might be, and 'er father was eatin' a nice bit of tripe as was over from dinner, when Susy, that's 'er, says as 'ow she loved God and was goin' to 'eaving when she doied. *What?*" in tones of horror, "Ain't yer goin' to give 'er no medicine?"

THE HUNT FOR THE WORD.

THE business of a publisher divides itself into three functions. The first is that he should select books to publish; the second that he should publish them; and the third that he should call attention to the fact of their publication. Of these, the third is rapidly outstripping the others in importance, and is therefore naturally the one on which most care, thought, and artistic endeavour come to be expended. It is universally conceded (except by a few old-fashioned persons who of course do not count) that the best book is the one of which most copies are sold; and therefore the book which everybody wishes, let us not say, to buy, but to be able to talk about, is the one which everybody is supposed to have read, to be reading, or to be about to read. When once the idea of a large sale has taken root, matters are simple; it is only necessary to advertise the figures, and the rest of the sheep will follow where so many have led. The publisher who neglected to employ so simple and efficacious a method would be neglecting his duty to his client and to himself. It is, however, when the idea has not yet taken root, that the art of publishing achieves its real triumphs, in convincing the public that a certain work has sold, is selling, or will sell in large quantities. Some time ago this effect was produced by a rapid succession of editions. Books entered upon their sixth or seventh impression with marvellous celerity, and the fact was vociferously proclaimed. Gradually, however, it became noised abroad that

not many copies need necessarily go to an edition; the proclamation began to lose something of its significance, and a newer device took its place. Were Mr. X. to assert that he has implicit belief in the high literary merit of the novel he will publish on such a day, the world might possibly remain sceptical. But if this hypothetical gentleman communicates through the public press the intelligence that he has led off with an order to his printer for a very large number of copies, a certain stir of interest is perceptible. It costs indubitably a considerable sum to print, say, ten thousand copies of a novel; and the publisher who has not only given that order, but has paid for reiterated proclamation of the fact in several newspapers, does plainly back his opinion, and is therefore rewarded by a certain degree of attention. Moreover, if he really knows his business, he will be careful to bring this conclusive argument before the notice of some influential critic, or at least of some critic who has the reputation among the booksellers of being able to influence public opinion,—as expressed in shillings, the only expression of public opinion for which the bookseller has any respect. There is always some such a critic about, ready to stand sponsor at the shortest notice to any aspiring author, provided only that he can count on being first in the field.

In these remarks will be found, we believe, some explanation of the unusual comment aroused by the publication of Mr. Charles Marriott's novel, *THE COLUMN*. We cordially

agree with the reviewer who hailed it as something "outside the common ruck of fiction;" but we are equally convinced that it was not of a kind to become rapidly prominent without an extraordinary degree of advertisement. It is true that a little while before the momentous day of issue the publisher was good enough to "confidently predict that this novel will rank as one of the most remarkable productions in fiction of recent years;" but this gallant expression of opinion (which, after all, as it stood, was not much more convincing than Lucretia's reason for her belief in Proteus) might still, we suspect, have left an oft-duped public cold, had no more solid assurance of confidence been forthcoming. At all events, by a variety of means, attention was called to the book as to something of wholly exceptional merit. Almost simultaneously with the date of publication a flourish of trumpets was sounded in nearly all the leading journals which, both in its volume and its unanimity, recalled something of the rapture which greeted the once immortal AYLWIN. The story, we were told, combined "all the best faculties of the writers known to everyone." All the author's characters "have stepped from life into his pages to be turned about and displayed by a mind which lets nothing escape." "To the ordinary novels of the day it is as light is to darkness;" a comparison which another critic, with a finer turn of fancy, bettered by vowing it to be as far ahead of the ruck as "Snowdon's summit is from the level of Primrose Hill." "THE COLUMN is an extraordinarily fine achievement, and until its author publishes again we hardly expect to see its equal." And so on, and so on, till the chorus culminated in this enigmatic (but to the elect no doubt convincing) pronouncement:

"The *format* is the Bodley's best." Obviously a writer who is welcomed in such terms on his first appearance cannot be treated as a beginner; we look to him not for promise, but for performance.

Let us begin, then, with an examination of the book. Structurally, its edifice is of the simplest. Miss Daphne Hastings, a young lady of unusual type, makes the centre of a highly unusual community brought together by chance (as we are asked to believe) in a Cornish village. Her surviving parent, Edward Hastings, had married a Greek woman, and returned from Greece bringing with him his daughter, and a single Doric column which he has erected on the sea-cliff in view of his windows, planting laurels round it. He is known to a limited circle as the author of *SUBSOIL*, a volume of essays which, we are given to understand, preach a Hellenic paganism. Daphne, after taking part in a rehearsal of Schubert's B minor Symphony performed by the village Choral Society with the doctor conducting, feels a crisis of her fate impending. She wanders to the column, viola in hand, and as she strikes the strings of her instrument she is answered by a man's voice from below the cliff, crying for help. This is Mr. Basil Waring, brother of the Vicar of the unusual parish, and a person of the most aggravating culture. He turns out to be a devout admirer of *SUBSOIL* and to have broken his leg. He is nursed under the roof of Hastings, and marries Daphne. In a little while the pair discover that they are not in complete emotional sympathy. Mr. Hastings dies, leaving Daphne lonely; but a baby is born to whom she transfers her entire devotion. Basil, a little in the cold, goes to London, and relapses into an amour; but this has no bearing on the story as Daphne knows nothing

of it. Before he returns, she, a strong swimmer, goes to bathe where she has always bathed, and is drowned.

It is, of course, only fair to say that Mr. Marriott would not accept this as an accurate outline of his plot. It omits the part played by the column and generally by inanimate nature. But we are speaking at present of what we can claim to understand, and upon that we have certain criticisms to offer. First, then, beyond the romantic manner of his apposite arrival, we can conceive no earthly reason why Daphne should fall in love with Basil Waring. Mr. Marriott sees him as a person fundamentally contemptible, but superficially attractive; the reader, however, is not made at any point in the book to feel the attractive quality. That is a grave defect in art. *ROMOLA* is not among the great novels, but George Eliot leaves us in no doubt of Tito's fascination. Secondly, the scene between the couple newly returned from the honeymoon, where Basil (who has acquired the habit of popular instruction in the East End), proposes to make the column a place of educational pilgrimage for tourists, is perfectly incredible. He does not merely hazard the suggestion; he insists, in the teeth of the girl's natural repugnance. This is not psychology; it is caricature. And it leads up to a second, and even worse, scene by a complication which we omitted from our sketch of the plot. Michael Trigg, verger of the church, is a born mystic; a picturesque, if rather pedantic, dissertation upon Cornish character prepares us for his readiness to attempt a spell. Devout himself, he believes that Hastings has died and been damned for a heathen, and that Daphne is kept from conversion by the malign influence of the column. Following, therefore, the principle of magic, that

to act on a part is acting on the whole, he chips a fragment from the column and, bringing it to church, lays it under the cloth to be consecrated with the Eucharist. Daphne, recovering from childbirth, goes to the column and Basil accompanies her. She sees the damage, and instantly assumes that he has taken advantage of her illness to introduce his tourists to the consecrated spot. When he explains, with natural irritation, that her assumption is groundless, she accuses him of intent to "drag her into a vulgar quarrel." Her behaviour at this point may be extremely feminine, but it is not that of the traditional Greek goddess.

As for the other element, which is, we presume, symbolic, it defies criticism. That the column had something to do with Daphne's drowning we are bound to believe, since there is no other and easier explanation. There is a long chapter which describes how Daphne, in that excitable state which accompanies the early stages of pregnancy, sees a vision where the column takes its place in a great temple, and she herself is led by a procession to the altar. Then the sky opens, thunder crashes, and she is aware of her re-consecration to some mysterious bridegroom whom she had unwittingly forsaken in marrying a mere mortal. It is all very fine, but to the plain man more than a little bewildering.

There remain two grounds on which the book may claim notice, its presentation of character and its virtuosity of style. On the first of those we base our regard for Mr. Marriott's talent. Daphne is, as we have urged, not always well shown, but on the whole she is an impressive figure. Her father, Mr. Hastings, is very slightly but skilfully indicated, and so is the vicar, Herbert Waring. The characters treated in the manner of Meredithian

farce (for of course Mr. Marriott derives bodily from that source) move us less, the doctor, for instance, and Mr. and Mrs. Bargister. Gertrude Laffey, the designing female who completes her conquest of Basil, is better; but the stimulus of what Mr. Marriott is pleased to call her "muliebrity" is somewhat nauseously insisted on, and the preciosity of her appalling letter, in reply to Basil's equally intolerable narration of his mishap, passes all endurance. There remain two really good figures, the boy Johnnie and the sculptor Cathcart. Their part in the story is only to assist in the presentment of Daphne, but there is enough of them both to make one think that Mr. Marriott may some day do good work, when he learns to be less clever and perceives that excellence lies in simplicity not in contortion.

Coleridge defined good prose as "proper words in their proper places," and he further held that works of imagination should be written in very plain language; "the more purely imaginary they are, the more necessary it is to be plain." Very different is the case with those who nowadays are commended for style. "How forcible," observed the tormented Job, "are right words!" It is for the wrong words that our young geniuses toil as some men have been known to toil for virtue. The word which they desire to find is the word which no one else would have employed; the image by which they prefer to illustrate their meaning is the one which no one else would have been clever enough to think of. And Mr. Marriott can bandy conceits with the best of them. Such a phrase as "the mouthpiece of history chuckles vain salacity" should make him free at once and for ever of the Guild of Gibberish. Yet when he pleases he can be neat and pointed while still

remaining intelligible. Here is a description of the impression made by the village doctor in his capacity of musical conductor.

Mrs. Bargister, who reverently misquoted him, wondered why he did not compose an oratorio or something. Chaperoning her daughter to the weekly rehearsals, she hung upon the music with pathetic fidelity, and had, under the mordant civility of Caspar Gillies, already learned to swallow "How pretty." The action was almost physical, and with any silence, accidental or designed, there was to be seen upon her face the look of the dog who is nearly surprised into the forbidden bark.

This again is good, though in a very different key, concerning Daphne's mood as she issued from the music to her wandering on the cliff on the evening when she heard Basil cry for help.

The calyx of her heart had unclosed a little, hinting roseate possibilities to be brooded over in midnight solitudes. [The suggestion of midnight, though, in this context is bad.] It was as if, fingering a familiar cabinet, she had pressed the spring of a secret drawer hitherto unsuspected; and for the time the world held for her nothing to be compared with its dim-seen fragrant contents.

But the mind needs other things of a writer than comparisons, even if they be witty or beautiful, and the desperate determination to be continuously ingenious is distracting. We will give a case in point, from some more comment of the same kind upon Basil, observing, by the way, that Mr. Marriott is not content to let his characters display themselves in word or act; he must be for ever expounding, and for ever ingenious in the exposition.

He [Basil] habitually steeped himself in the atmosphere of the moment, and at intervals examined his soul as one would a meerschaum—to see how it was colouring. Before the arrival of the post

he had been heaving the lead into his consciousness and picking out samples of the deposit of the last few weeks. The result was satisfactory to his self-esteem, and the congenial task of raking among the contents of his mental dredger revealed many pretty things.

The lead, it may be submitted, is not a dredger. Basil, indeed, has a most disturbing effect on Mr. Marriott. When, bored alike with the country and his wife, he leaves her for some alleged business in London, his journey, by the sufficiently prosaic medium of the Great Western railway, stirs our author into the strangest example of what Ruskin has taught us to call the pathetic fallacy.

The names of stations shouted by porters became cries of welcome; and by Reading he already heard the diapason of the Strand. The fever of the town was on him; he voiced the epic of London arousing his companions—upon whom had fallen the vague fear of the metropolis—as one leading pilgrims to some land of promise. *Even the engine seemed infected with his rapture, bounding forward with answering cries.*

Mr. Marriott's style has been praised by one of his admirers for being careful; but careful of what, we would ask? Will anyone unravel the tangle of ideas in the following phrase? "To her excited imagination the whispering laurels were inimical and the column upreared the stern monitor of an ideal slipping from her grasp." That, we desire to state brutally, is not English, however one may take it. How does a column uprear a monitor,—or a minotaur? We incline to the belief that Mr. Marriott intends the verb in a neuter sense, as later he writes: "At the far end upreared a white presence, veiled, inscrutable." To this phrase the same objection applies; it is not English. To make it English we must write: "At the far end a white presence, etc., reared up,"—and that

is nonsense. To such extremities are men driven by the hunt for the unexpected word.

The effects of this chase upon Mr. Marriott are widely varied. Sometimes a well-meant effort after distinction of phrasing lands him in the merely incomprehensible.

If the man [Edward Hastings] could be held local of any place, he was of Greece; here he impinged, and the intensity of contact suggested to the competent observer a key to his character; though there was but little in his habits to corroborate the theorist and nothing to encourage the bore.

Why intensity of contact should suggest a key, even to the most competent observer, we are at a loss to know, and the latter part of the sentence is dark as Erebus. *Impinged* is a word specially consecrated to strange uses with this author, who writes, for example, of "a heavy windless evening, with a sky so burnished that the edges of things impinged with an insistence that was almost audible." No doubt this means something; but for our own part we can but re-echo good Dr. Gillies's comment on a certain passage in *SUBSOIL*, and confess that we "fail to see what he means"; and moreover we feel far from certain of Mr. Marriott's ability to enlighten us. We should like him to try Dryden's test, and see how he would put it into Latin. He is a scholar, or at least weighted with trappings of scholarship which are not worn lightly. Such a passage as this, for example, can only be described as sheer pedantry.

Nowhere is the insurgence of Spring more absolute than in London. Out on the countryside the Epithalamion of sun and earth is more modulate, for even in midwinter there is a pretty conjugal civility, a kind of breakfast-table dalliance between them. But when the almond breaks in London squares it is Olympian wooing or nothing.

The observation is pleasant enough, but surely a thing of this sort can be said without two neologisms such as *insurgence* and *modulate*. A little further we read how "the infatuate pair seek to smother the Devil with the roses of amenity;" and when, in the same paragraph, Mr. Marriott wishes to allude to this metaphor, he writes that "they continued their Heliogabalus-pastime," a compound before which the bravest Teuton might grow pale. One last illustration of this vice cannot be spared, for Mr. Marriott's own profit.

The individuality of our English Counties is unquestionable; and he who is susceptible to such influences has little need of map-makers. That is, if he can rid his mind of the tyranny of history and the impotency of the alleged development. For the disturbing power of the latter, one has only to point to the metropolis! *Here time has exploded the plausible fallacy of the Geometrician, and London holds Middlesex in its belly.*

What the second sentence means we cannot conjecture, but the words italicised are Mr. Marriott's elegant way of saying that in spite of Euclid the greater is contained by the less. It would be difficult to burlesque a manner such as this. How far in sheer infelicity a man may be carried by the habitual abuse of words, is best seen in a passage, which it is, we trust, not irreverent to quote. Daphne and her friend Miss Williams are together on the cliffs: "They might have sat for Mary and a more tolerant Martha, captive to the trivial round, but respecting her sister's pregnant indolence." Of all adjectives!—but Mr. Marriott is in a way excusable. No self-respecting writer nowadays would speak of a pregnant woman,—pregnant silences, pregnant words, pregnant landscape, anything with which the word has never before

been coupled, if you please—but to employ the word in its natural meaning is a solecism too gross to contemplate.

Mr. Marriott, it need hardly be said, is not alone in his vagaries. How should he be, when such things are hailed as excellences? Some time ago an author submitted a manuscript to a well-known publisher. The manuscript was declined with a courteous letter in which the publisher deplored the absence of distinction in the author's style. "Have you not read the stories by Mr. Bernard Capes?" he asked. "Can you not try to write like Mr. Capes?" Now Mr. Capes is a shining example of those extravagances which it is the special purpose of this article to deprecate. Open his book, *THE LAKE OF WINE*, and you come upon a lurid procession of sentences like this:

A squirrel ran from branch to root of a beech tree like a stain of rust; a cloud of fieldfares went down the sky and wheeled, disintegrated, as if they were so much blown powder; the ruddocks twinkled in the hedges like dead leaves flicked by the wind.

The true object of a descriptive passage is, we believe, to suggest to the mind of the reader the physical settings of a scene or event. Mr. Capes has other views. It is as if he stood on the front of a platform and said: "Gentlemen, here is a tree; pray observe, not the tree, but the words and similes in which I shall describe it. They are specially invented for the occasion." A squirrel goes down a tree-trunk in a flash of russet colour; Mr. Capes will liken it to the slow trace of rust. A flock of fieldfares turn on the wing; Mr. Capes will never say they scatter,—they are disintegrated. Robin is too vulgar a word for his

fancy; the bird shall be a ruddock, and the sudden showing of his red breast shall be likened to what in all nature it least resembles, the motion of a dead leaf. His hero rides across the downs and an outcrop of white chalk is seen as Nature showing her teeth at him. Thus he achieves distinction and a style.

Mr. Marriott limits his research for the unexpected to the written word; his personages speak intelligibly; but Mr. Capes, not content with his own elegance, makes his characters also "parley euphuism." "That I should come to be the eyesalve of such a parcel of oafs!" exclaims the hero when he finds himself stared at. "Your ambition is a tortoise," is the sentence that he springs upon a servant, not unnaturally frightened of so superfine a speaker. "Mr. Tuke," we are told a little later, "laboriously strained at a camel of wit;" and the phrase seems to us admirably descriptive of Mr. Capes's own methods. "Gentlemen, gentlemen," we seem to hear him crying, "for Heaven's sake let us not forget ourselves so far as to be simple!" If his hero wake of a morning, we find him "lying lazily snoozed among the pillows." If there is a landscape-effect on hand, here is the procedure: "The grass was a foot long and so weighted with dew that a kilderkin of sweet water might have been gathered from it." Truly it is a sonorous word that fills the central place in this sentence and becomes at once the intellectual focus, sending our minds post-haste to memories, not of dew-drenched lawns, but of the ineffectual struggle to master weights and measures. And the worst of it is that Mr. Capes had really a pretty instinct for the feeling of the scene and took the right method to convey it. A common word would have expressed his mean-

ing simply and avoided the inevitable jar of the entirely unexpected and incongruous. But *kilderkin* undoes him, and the essential effect is sacrificed to the hunt for the word. His sentence would gain and not lose by translation into Latin, to revert to our test; but we should like to see the faces of Professors Jebb and Tyrrell if they were set down to render a phrase like this: "She sang to herself in that odd wild voice of hers, the stinging disharmonies of which seemed to flicker up in the flame of her hair." There you have the modern method in its full beauty. *Disharmonies* is not English, nor Greek either for that matter; it is a new and spurious mintage. Neither harmonies nor disharmonies can either sting or flicker, and hair, though it has been likened with natural fitness and beauty to a flame blown backward, cannot possibly (unless under a barber's revolving brush) resemble an ascending flame. A single licence sparingly taken produces its appropriate effect: such a phrase as "stinging discords" might grace a period; but this riot of incongruities results only in gibberish.

And the pity of it is that the men who run after these new inventions are men of real talent. Mr. Capes has not the power of characterisation which we have noted in Mr. Marriott; but he has what Mr. Marriott entirely lacks (so far as we have opportunity for judging), the power of inventing incident. *THE LAKE OF WINE*, if it were translated into English, would be a really good story. Indeed, toward the latter part of the book, when his hands are full with the narrative, the author does not indulge to the same extent in this habit of acrobatic contortion. But in a later book, *OUR LADY OF DARKNESS*, we find a dilution of the narrative gift and no tempering of the extrava-

gance in diction. Take again Mr. Neil Munro, a writer whose first volume, *THE LOST PIBROCH*, filled us with hopes that his subsequent work has not yet entirely dashed. Take the opening of a chapter of his story, *DOOM CASTLE*, from the May number of *Blackwood's Magazine*.

Long after, when Count Victor Jean de Montaignon was come into great good fortune, and sat snug by charcoal-fires in the chateau that bears his name, and stands an edifice even the Du Barry had the taste to envy, upon the *gusset* of the roads which *break apart* a league to the south of the forest of St. Germain-en-Laye, he would recount, with *oddly inconsistent humours of mirth and tense dramatics*, the manner of his escape from the cell in the fosse of the Great MacCailen. And always his acutest memory was of the *whipping* rigour of the evening air, his temporary sense of *swounding* helplessness, upon the verge of the *fantastic* wood. "Figure you! Charles," would he say, "the *thin-blooded wand* of forty years ago in a brocaded waistcoat and a pair of dancing-shoes seeking his way through a labyrinth of *demoniac trees*."

What would Lockhart have said, we should like to know, to such a passage? Would he not have cried *havoc* and let slip the scorpions? But as things go, we have merely to remark that the forcing of the note is a little more obvious than usual. *Tense dramatics* is of course not English, but who cares nowadays to limit himself to a beggarly dictionary?

The man to blame for all this is not Mr. Meredith, the chief of sinners by example. It is Stevenson with his preaching of a doctrine that concentrated effort not on the thing to be said but on the manner of saying it. Stevenson himself had always an infinite deal to say. His invention was endlessly prolific in stories, his critical intelligence was infinitely subtle in the ethical casuistry for which life offered endless material to

his insatiable curiosity. However one may rate him as an artist, his influence upon the younger generation has unquestionably been far reaching. But, happily or unhappily, he wrote and thought like a Scot. The Scotch divines, who were his spiritual as well as his physical forefathers, transmitted to him a taste for polysyllables, and he was born a worshipper of exotic words. Anything appealed to him more than the natural way of easy speech, and he preached the deliberate cultivation of an assumed manner. He "played the sedulous ape" himself to Lamb, Hazlitt, and many another besides, and the method, like all the methods of genius, answered for himself. Other men follow it with disastrous result. They play the sedulous ape to Stevenson, and they push his tricks to the point at which imitation becomes caricature. *ST. IVES* is a bad example of Stevenson's manner, as he knew and said himself; it is unfinished work, dictated by a man not used to dictating, and composed under the pressure of a deadly illness. But in Stevenson's part of the book it would be hard to find parallels to such a sentence as this which we take from Mr. Quiller Couch's few concluding chapters that complete the tale.

Prompt upon the inference came inspiration. I must win to the centre of the crowd, and a crowd is invariably indulgent to a drunkard. *I hung out the glaring signboard of crapulous glee. Lurching, hiccupping, jostling, apologising to all and sundry with spacious incoherence, I plunged my way through the sightseers.*

Take this again: "Wind in hidden gullies and the talk of lapsing waters on the hillside filled all the spaces of the night." Or this, where the hero is describing his escape in a balloon: "We were made one with

the clean silences receiving us." The point to be especially noted is that these finical phrases are placed in the mouth of a French soldier who, though born above the ranks, had seen all his service in them. It would be easy, but ungracious, to add other examples. Mr. Couch undertook a most thankless task to serve the wife and family of a dead friend, and, we may be sure, worked with more anxiety than he would have done on his own account. But the passages cited are examples of Stevenson's manner as Mr. Couch conceives it. The pages of *WEIR OF HERMISTON* offer a contrast rather than a parallel to such writing.

We have done with our illustrations. The moral we would wish to convey may be briefly stated. Words are the medium for displaying thought, not the thing to be displayed. It is the thought, the observation, or the invention that matters, not the words. Their main business is to be adequate; if we allow to them a beauty, it should be secondary, not primary. There has been no greater master of words than Horace, and his dictum is emphatic,

Verbaque provisam rem non invita
sequuntur,

which Lewis Carroll has freely rendered in his happy parody of a familiar piece of advice, "Take care of the sense, and the sounds will take care of themselves." The something "*insigne, recens, indictum ore alio*, (notable and new and such as no other poet had sung before)," which he proposed to produce in honour of Bacchus, was not a new word, nor any nice derangement of epitaphs. He was not going to speak of *molten voices* or *blue music*. He was going to make something new

out of the old words, conforming, as was his custom, to the demands of common sense. And Horace wrote in verse, where licences are more permissible. Prose is, or ought to be, the tongue of ordinary speech a little arranged and conventionalised. Our last thought would be to under-value polish, but polish consists in removing roughness and incongruities, not in adding them. The hunt for the word results in a bedevilment of the common English with a mass of ill-assorted oddities; and we believe it to be for the practised writer a purely unnecessary exercise. At all events, Thackeray's manuscripts showed scarcely an erasure, and few men have written better than Thackeray. Scott perhaps is hardly a model; his prose, to borrow his own phrase, is apt at times to be a little loose about the joints. But his faults are superficial and accidental: his excellences are essential, the "countless unaffected colloquial charms and on-carryingness of his diction," which Coleridge spoke of; and these are incompatible with a stilted and tortuous utterance. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the right word is not the unexpected word, but that which will unobtrusively commend itself as natural and appropriate. We would plead with the younger generation of writers to be natural even in print; not to disguise from the world that urbanity and unpretending grace which we are sure distinguishes their private conversation; in a word, to write more or less as they talk. But if they have, with much application, learned to talk as they write, we can only implore them for their own sake and that of others, to unlearn what must inevitably be a most paralysing and intolerable accomplishment.

HIS FIRST ENGAGEMENT.

I.

BOBBY was an anachronism. He lived in an age not his own, and his own age knew him not; but the arrangement suited him exactly. He loved his surroundings, and was loth to change them for what might have seemed more congenial. He was a boy of twelve, who, according to all established custom and many well-grounded reasons, should have been in England, at school, playing with boys of his own age, and learning Euclid and Latin; but his father was loth to part with one who, for all his youth, was so sterling a companion, and who was also so obviously happy. Bobby's mother had died four years ago, and perhaps this was also a reason that father and son still clung to each other beyond the time usually allotted to Anglo-Indians.

The life that appealed so strongly to Bobby was not one that his elders altogether appreciated. There, however, he had the advantage over them, for the delights of the club and the ball-room, and the luxuries of a comfortable mess were unknown to him. It was no hardship, therefore, to him to be doomed to a winter at the foot of two parallel ranges of bare hills in a dreary frontier-post; indeed it was infinitely preferable to the summer that he had just spent with strangers in Cashmere. It was enough to be with the great man his father, to ride his sure-footed sturdy little Tangan pony up hill and down dale in his father's company, wherever his duties or the chance of sport might take him.

His father, Major James, was political officer of this part of the North-West Frontier, which was being held for a certain period by a Brigade of Occupation. A Brigade of Occupation, if necessary, is a necessary evil: it is an evil to the people of the country who hate invasion except in so far as they can profit pecuniarily by it; it is an evil to those who occupy, for it means the loss of the amenities of the life of cantonments with none of the counterbalancing advantages of war-service. The men therefore hate it because of heavier duties and curtailed comforts; and the officers hate it, because the polo-ground, if it exists, is bound to be uneven and stony, and because there is no excitement, and no society, and fewer comfortable chairs.

Thus it came about that, except in a measure for his father, who was inured to the life, and was a highly important individual (more important in many ways than the General himself), Bobby was the only supremely happy person in the post of Kala, though it contained some twenty British officers, and about two hundred soldiers and followers.

Bobby, too, was a great man in his way, and had a faithful following of his own. There was Badshah, the skew-bald Tangan pony aforesaid, and there was a bull-bitch called Dodo, who slept on his bed every night, and followed him everywhere, except when the sun was too hot; and besides these, there were Mal Singh and Abdullah, and a few lesser beings, not necessary to mention, for they merely waited upon his bodily

needs. Abdullah was important, for he was a learned man, a *moonshee*, and an English scholar, who taught Bobby to read and write, and to do sums; but the latter had a far greater respect for Mal Singh. Mal Singh was a pensioner from a great Sikh regiment and now spent his declining years in the service of the Major Sahib, whose father had in days long ago been his first commanding officer. His duties now were those of orderly to the third generation that he had known of this family of Sahibs *bahadur*, and he became to Bobby much what the pedagogue was to the youth of ancient Greece.

A good native soldier can become the best old retainer in the world, and Mal Singh's attendance upon Bobby was a wonderful combination of lavish respect and wise control. His influence was very salutary. He never let the boy do anything that was not what a young Sahib should do, though in restraining him he never ceased to be his servant. He rode with him when his father could not. He carried his gun in his first essays at shooting, and told him when, where, how, and at what to shoot. He carried his orders to the lesser servants, and squatted patiently by the hour in the verandah, while the little Sahib did his sums with Abdullah or slept his noon-day sleep.

So Bobby was a young satrap, with the Englishman's imperial instincts well developed in him. If you had thrown him straight away into an English home, he would in twenty-four hours have been dubbed by all the inmates an incorrigibly spoiled and unmanageable urchin; and this would have been true, but only because he would have been unadapted to his surroundings.

But he had one trouble; it was the dread of leaving his father. He knew that it would come; that all boys

went home to school, and left their fathers, their ponies, their dogs, and their servants, and the bright sun and the jungles behind them, and exchanged these for rain and fog and much book-learning and many maiden aunts. He put the thought from him philosophically, and never mentioned it, because his father did not.

Thus the blow fell heavier when it did fall. One fine morning in December his father told him that on the day after the morrow he would take him down to Bombay and there put him on a steamer bound for England; that there his home would be with relatives, but that it was also destined that he should go to a school where there would be fifty other boys besides himself.

Bobby struggled bravely with his tears, though he could not quite keep them down; but he was a Sahib, though a little one, and so, controlling himself, he prepared to face the worst. Thinking, wisely enough, that the best way to face the worst was to make it a little better if possible, he suggested to his father that the morrow being his last day, it ought to be spent in the pleasantest manner conceivable. Accordingly, after much consideration, it was decided that his father should invite the officers in the post to a shooting-party, for it was the season for the *ubara*.¹

A political officer should know his country almost as well as a fox-hunting squire at home; and besides, from his dealings with the natives, he is the natural recipient of all the most trustworthy reports as to where game is to be found. Therefore some dozen or so of officers who could be spared from their military duties accepted Major James's invitation gladly. Whether the sport were good or bad, to get away from this accursed brown mud fort from morning till evening on any

¹ *Ubara*, the lesser buzzard.

pretext was a god-send in itself. But when it became known that the motive of the expedition was to wish Bobby farewell, then all who could accepted with alacrity; for Bobby, besides being a healthy, sturdy, sporting little fellow, had also the charm of being unique; and wherever men herd together they love to concentrate affection upon a single object different in kind from themselves, whether it be the pet goat of a regiment, or the parrot of a ship's crew, or even an inanimate object such as the ship itself, or, with a regiment, the colours of the regiment. In this case it was a boy that did duty as regimental pet to two whole regiments, who was as much at home in every officer's mud-hut as in his own father's quarters, and whom they were all accustomed to see daily tripping fearlessly over the horses' heel-ropes in the cavalry lines, or helping casual half-naked sepoy to clean their rifles. They turned out, therefore, in force to do Bobby honour, when they heard with regret that this was to be his last day among them.

II.

The sun rose late on a bright December morning. By half-past nine the air was warm enough to make the slow ride over broken ground to the spot where they were going to begin shooting tolerable, if not exactly pleasant. Mounted on ponies and clad in the embroidered yellowsheep-skin coats called *poshteens*, that are one of the chief exports of Afghanistan, the party of fourteen filed out of the fort, followed by their grooms, and by their orderlies carrying their guns. Outside they picked up a motley crowd of ragged coolies, whom Major James's political influence had apparently conjured up out of the barren soil, and who would

be useful later on for driving the game. They were accompanied by twenty men as escort, though this was in mere obedience to standing-orders, no sign of disaffection among the neighbouring tribes having shown itself for many months.

For the first few miles the ground was covered with big stones, with no vegetation to speak of, and intersected at every few hundred yards by broad deep *nullahs* the sides of which were generally precipitous, with only occasional gaps, down one of which, on the loose pebbles, your pony with some remonstrance would consent to slip, and up another of which on the opposite side he would climb with much effort and many back-slidings. No pony so clever at this game as Badshah, the Nepaulese Tangan. Thus progress was slow and it was not till eleven o'clock that they reached the part over which they were going to shoot. Here the nature of the ground altered. The riders dismounted, leaving their ponies to be led after them on the outskirts of the jungle; for they had reached a spot where the ber-thorn bush grew thick and tenacious; and a ber-thorn covert is what the *ubara* loves. Here they began the serious work of the day.

Major James, posting his party in a line at suitable intervals from each other behind thorn-bushes, sent on the coolies to drive towards them what *ubara* there might be lurking in the jungle ahead. It was natural that hospitality should give place in his heart that day to fatherly affection, and pardonable that he should post his son Bobby in the likeliest spot of all. The party was in Bobby's honour, and all were glad to see his father put him near a short space of clear ground, beyond which was a thick belt of ber-thorns, in which, if anywhere, an *ubara* should be hiding.

Then all was quiet. The coolies'

chatter was heard for the time being no more. They had gone ahead, sticks in hand, under the direction of Bobby's orderly, Mal Singh, to drive the game towards the Sahibs.

Soon a confused murmur of grunts and snorts and the throwing of stones into the bushes and the beating of them with sticks reached the sportsmen's ears. It grew louder and clearer. Mal Singh's voice was heard upbraiding a delinquent coolie, and the delinquent coolie was heard rattling off his thousand excuses; but no game made its appearance. Shooting in the East is often disappointing; partly for the simple reason that in many places it is not very good, but still more because the natives who tell you birds are plentiful, tell you so to please you for the moment, rather than because it is the fact. Only the day before Major James had been told that *ubara* were as plentiful in this jungle as vultures round a dead camel; and this was the result.

Just as the drive was at its end, and as the certainty of a blank was impressing itself upon them all, with a whirr like a partridge, a grouse, and a pheasant rolled in one, up out of the thick thorns in front of Bobby got a game old cock-*ubara*, and flew strong on the wing across him. Up went Bobby's gun to his shoulder and covered the bird well. Bang went the contents of a No. 3 cartridge into his head, and with a swerve and a swoop down he fell among the berthorns as dead as Julius Caesar. "I sha'n't mind going to school so much now, Father," said Bobby, as the Major came up and patted him on the back.

The drive was over. A coolie picked the bird up, and was carrying it off to its destination in the game-bag. But Mal Singh, seizing him by what clothing there was to seize, wrested the bird from him, and pushed

the fellow away. This was no ordinary bird, shot by an ordinary Sahib, to be put in a game-bag unnoticed and eaten casually at sundown. It was the bird that his master, Bobby Sahib, son of the great Major Sahib, the political officer, and grandson of his own commanding officer Sahib of old days, had, alone of all the other Sahibs, shot with his own gun on this, the last day that he should call him master. Placing it carefully in his left hand, and measuring his distance from Bobby with his eye, he sprang to attention, and, as though on parade at a general's inspection, marched with all the swagger of the proudest soldier-race in the world to within six paces of Bobby. Then his heels met with a click, his right hand flew to his forehead and down to his side in a lightning salute, and bending down he placed the bird carefully at Bobby's feet, muttering, with a lump in his throat and tears in his eyes, "*Shábásh, shábásh!*"¹

III.

This was the only bird shot that day. The men that had brought the news that *ubara* were plentiful were arrant liars, and after four more drives and no more luck, they were all glad enough to stop this pretence of shooting and eat a hearty lunch under the clump of trees that Major James pointed out ahead of them.

Still the party had not been altogether a failure, for if there was only one bird to be shot, it was obvious to all that Bobby was the right man to shoot it. Moreover the regrets of frustrated sport can soon be obliterated in food and drink, especially when breakfast was long ago, and much ground has been covered in the meantime; and when A. is a friend of B., and both A. and B. know C. inti-

¹ *Shábásh*, well done, bravo!

mately, and when A., B. and C. are all at work on the same meat-pie, and helping themselves from the same bottle. So luncheon went merrily on, and the birds that were not were soon forgotten. Later on they pledged Bobby in many toasts, to which he responded with few words and much ginger-beer. They wished him luck on his voyage, luck on the football-field, luck on the cricket-field, luck in the form-room, and luck in the future, when he should return a full-blown officer of Her Majesty's service, like his father and his grandfather before him.

Mal Singh, squatting underneath a shady tree close by watched the Sahibs making merry, and was glad that his young master was the cynosure of their eyes. And because the noon-tide was warm, and he had trudged many miles on foot, and was an old man, weariness came upon him, so that, bowing his head into the angle of his elbow, he slept. Dodo, the bull-bitch, who had remained with Badshah the pony during the shooting, had now come nearer and joined Mal Singh, while her master was in the charmed luncheon-circle to which she was not admitted. Like Mal Singh, she had sat eyeing the proceedings with interest, and may be pride, and like him at length she succumbed to weariness and slept.

Then the others lit cheroots, and lay back in inelegant comfortable positions to take what ease a hard ground could afford, till it should be time to be stirring. This did not amuse Bobby who did not smoke, and whose digestion was not like a grown man's that cried for repose after a meal. Wherefore he slipped away quietly to take a stroll, passing close to where Mal Singh and Dodo slept. Mal Singh slept on, but Dodo, waking at the approach of her master's footsteps, followed quietly at his heels.

Fifty yards further on Bobby came to a *nullah*, the exploration of which seemed the obvious method of employing his time. Down he dropped into it, displacing many stones from the cracked crumbling soil in his descent; and down dropped Dodo after him, displacing even more with her clumsy tread.

The most prominent object in the *nullah* was a large boulder, with a further drop of the ground on the far side. Round it and down into the hollow Bobby scrambled, with Dodo behind, now pricking her ears, and sniffing the ground as best she could with her upturned nose.

IV.

In this hollow was crouching another boy of about the same age and height as Bobby, but of very different appearance. He was a thin-faced, sharp-featured, Jewish-nosed, sallow-complexioned boy, clad in dirty loose robes with a long knife hanging from a belt round his waist, another belt full of cartridges slung from his shoulder, and a small battered Remington rifle in his right hand. He stood up at Bobby's approach.

It was a strange meeting; the sturdy, chubby-faced English boy, carrying nothing in his hand, but with clenched fists and a stolid determined attitude, and the wiry, yellow little Afridi startled but all alert, and armed to the teeth. The two, recoiling slightly, stood facing each other. The British boy clenched his fists still tighter, and the Afridi, gripping his rifle, touched the handle of his knife with his left hand, while brown eyes met blue in a level, well-poised stare.

Matters remained thus at a deadlock, till Dodo relieved the situation by smelling the Afridi boy's ankles. The latter though brought up to

fear nothing, yet feared the bull-dog. Such a monstrous ungainly body, such an uncompromisingly vicious countenance, to one who had never seen the like in a dog before, seemed unnatural and demoniacal. But more terrifying than all fears was the fear of being afraid; and the Afridi boy found that he trembled, and the harder he tried not to, the more he trembled. And was he not the son of Shera Khan, the chief of Dara, a leader of men and a mighty warrior? And had not his father, laid low with fever, put him in command of his own *lashkar*¹ of one hundred men, and sent him hither? And how should such a one tremble, when a foul infidel's dog sniffed at his heels? For though possessed of unearthly ugliness, yet the monster was surely nothing more.

Nevertheless he was paralysed with fear, and dared not move; but yet the more he felt his fear the more he felt his shame, till at last, overcome by both, he burst into a flood of tears, while Dodo sniffed on calmly.

This outburst astonished Bobby far more than the actual meeting had done. He had seen armed Afridis before (though the Afridi boy had not seen British bull-dogs), and the blood-thirsty appearance of the young ruffian with his rifle and knife did not trouble him at all. Besides Dodo was with him, and Dodo, who was a born fighter, and whose tale of victories included many beasts from the common pariah-dog to the fretful porcupine, was a grand champion to have by one on chance meetings in lonely *nullahs*.

Thus Bobby on his part was not afraid, but only concerned when he saw the other boy weep. He was, as has been explained, not used to other boys, living, as he had always

done, with grown men. He wept sometimes himself, and on these occasions regarded himself remorsefully as an exception to the rest of Englishmen, though he knew that the practice was common enough among natives. Still when he saw another boy howl with his fist crammed into his eye in true boyish fashion, then he felt that it was not because he was a native but because he was a boy that he wept, and his heart went out to him accordingly.

To relieve the bitterness of the other's grief he dived into his pocket, where he found a half empty box of chocolates which he applied without delay. They had become partially melted with the sun, and the melted ones had not borne the jolt of Badshah's paces over-well; but they were still undoubtedly chocolates, and as such should serve their purpose. The Afridi boy did not know what to do with them, but Bobby whose Pushtoo was fluent, soon explained. Of course the former's fellow-tribesmen would have been shocked to see their chief's son partaking of food from the hand of a Christian. But the boy was distraught and unnerved, and knew not what he did; while the dangerous propinquity of Dodo's proboscis to his heels was an additional motive for compliance.

He took and ate, and was comforted. His eyes followed the box as Bobby withdrew it, and the latter, divining his look, was constrained to offer it again. The offer was again accepted, this time with more alacrity, and the two without more ado sat down together to make a serious business of what remained. Dodo sat down between them and partook also, but the Afridi edged away involuntarily from the dog's familiarities, so that Bobby's hospitable instincts forced him to put the dis-

¹ *Lashkar*, lit. a camp, and so a body of soldiers.

turbing element out of his guest's reach, and he pulled her by her collar over to his other side. Resenting this treatment Mistress Dodo moved away up the *nullah* for a ramble on her own account.

Thus comfortably settled in the hollow, and with the ice well broken by the chocolates, they began to talk. Bobby could speak Pushtoo easily, and thus there was no barrier between them on the score of language.

The Afridi boy was asked his name and told it; it was Mohamed Khan. In his turn he asked Bobby what had brought him thither; the latter explained that he had come with his father, the political officer, and with many others, and that to shoot *ubara* had been their object. Then, since his heart was still full of his morning's achievement, he straightway gave his listener a glowing account of the bird he had shot that morning. When he had dilated on the long weary waiting, while the coolies beat the bushes with no success, and told how at last, when there seemed no hope, a bird had indeed got up, and flown with much noise and speed near to where he stood with his gun, and how he had lifted his gun to his shoulder and taken aim, he paused to look into Mohamed Khan's face, but was disappointed to find that it lacked altogether the expression of enthusiasm which he felt himself, and which he had hoped to see there. The face was solemn and thoughtful, and after a time Mohamed Khan muttered, almost to himself: "Then the report was true."

"What report was true?" asked Bobby crossly. "Why talk you of reports, when I tell you of *ubara*?"

But Mohamed Khan with the same grave manner, and without looking at Bobby or apparently noticing his impatience, proceeded: "The report came to my father last night that

many Sahibs were coming to-day to shoot in this jungle, and they have come. Therefore the report was true."

"What is the matter with you?" demanded Bobby. "Why do you go on talking about these reports and not listen to my story?"

But Mohamed Khan would not listen and went on talking to himself. "The little Sahib is beautiful, though his dog is ugly, and he has shown me much kindness; and truly the sweetmeats of the Sahib-*logue*¹ are very sweet."

"What rot you talk!" blurted out Bobby in English; then again in Pushtoo he asked angrily: "What is the matter?"

But for answer Mohamed Khan put his fists in his eyes again and wept noisily.

The chocolates were exhausted, and so was Bobby's patience. That the only boy he had met for ages should turn out such a cry-baby was intolerable. He seized him by the shoulders as they sat together, and shaking him well, asked a third time what the matter was.

Mohamed Khan with much sobbing and gulping down of tears answered: "The Sahib is so fair and so brave, and his heart is so kind. Lo! his eyes are blue like the sky, and his face red like the sun at sunset. His like I have never seen. And I came into this *nullah* armed with my rifle and my dagger. And the Sahib came unarmed, yet he feared me not, but came near to me, and looked into my face. And he showed me great kindness, giving me in my trouble sweetmeats that were like unto the food of the Blessed in Paradise. Therefore what wonder is it that I love the Sahib? And what wonder is it that I now weep? For have I not come here with a hundred men of my

¹ *Sahib-logue*, the people of the Sahibs, the white folk.

father's *lashkar* to slay the Sahib and his father and his friends?"

Bobby's grip upon the Afridi's shoulders tightened; his eyes flamed; he muttered between his teeth, "You came to kill my father!" Then flinging his arms round him, they rolled over upon the ground.

Mohamed Khan's fighting instinct was aroused in a moment. They turned over and over one another, each struggling for the upper hand. Now Mohamed Khan was uppermost, now Bobby. The former's rifle had been kicked away at the beginning of the struggle, and lay out of reach. It seemed ages to them both, but it was barely two minutes that they lay struggling. Then Bobby's British weight and British back-bone told. Mohamed Khan lay exhausted beneath him, with his head bent back upon the ground, while Bobby pinned his body down with his knee, and holding his right arm down with his own left hand, placed his right hand in a throttling grip on the Afridi's throat. But this last act released the latter's left arm for the first time since the struggle had begun. One more moment's hard pressure on his throat would have rendered both that arm and the rest of his body powerless, but the Afridi boy had just time to place his free hand on the handle of his knife and begin to draw it from its scabbard.

But at this moment, just above them, there was a scrambling over the loose stones, a snort and a yelp, and Dodo's teeth, clutching at the loose folds of the sleeve of Mohamed Khan's tunic, as it moved about suspiciously while the arm that it hid was seizing the knife, met at length in the skinny bit of his wrist just clear of the bones, and stayed there; and thus the drawing of that knife was interrupted.

Bobby had heard Dodo's yelp and

knew that she had come to his assistance, but did not know what she had done; while the other, half-throttled, had no voice to cry out when bitten; so the English boy's hand gripped tighter and tighter at the Afridi's throat, till the latter's sallow face grew purple, his head hung limply backward, and his tongue lolled from his mouth.

He was vanquished. Bobby let go his hold, and looking round saw Dodo looking up at him wide-eyed, with Mohamed Khan's wrist between her teeth, and his hand and arm hanging limply from her mouth.

Then he saw the knife that hung from his enemy's side, and drawing it from the scabbard, examined it and played with it. He never thought of using it to put an end to his foe as he lay senseless and helpless beneath him; but Mohamed Khan waking anon from his swoon, and looking upward, saw Bobby leaning over him knife in hand. Thinking his end was near he cried: "Spare me, Sahib, spare me!"

"But you would not have spared my father, had you caught him thus," cried Bobby, suddenly fired to vengeance by the other's cringing entreaties.

"Do you then love your father so much that you needs must kill me? So be it. I too, Sahib, love my father." This he said haughtily but resignedly, accepting after a brief struggle the decree of Fate. "I too love my father," he repeated, "and for him I die. He sent me forth at the head of his men, because he was sick with fever and could not come. He bade me come and attack you unawares, while you were busy with your shooting or your feasting; for those who had advised you to come hither to shoot had also told us of your coming. Therefore I, at the head of a hundred men came hither.

These I left in yonder *nullah*, and myself came forward to spy upon your people as you sat at meat. Here, in this *nullah* I met you, and you and your dog have vanquished me. Slay me, then, now, and I will die, knowing that I have done all that my father would have had me do."

This filial devotion appealed to Bobby; it was just what he felt so strongly himself. Understanding his foe now and respecting him, he treated him with all the courtesy of nations, and as an honoured prisoner of war. First of all he bade Dodo loose her hold. This, with an upward look of reproach and misgiving, she at length did, revealing some ugly marks on Mohamed Khan's wrist. Bobby's handkerchief was wrapped carefully round as a bandage, and since the pain was not now great, the two sat up together side by side, as they had sat before, and reviewed the situation calmly. War had been declared and a decisive action fought; but now there was a suspension of hostilities, and a chance for overtures of peace.

There were two main difficulties that it was needful to smooth away. First of all, it was clear to Mohamed Khan, that if he took his men back, leaving the Sahibs unharmed, and if Bobby told his father what had been their intentions, then would they have accomplished nothing, but only incurred the wrath of the Sirkar¹ on account of their treacherous plotting. On the other hand, Bobby realised that if he were to let Mohamed Khan depart uninjured, and not tell his father of the plot that had been laid against him, he would be leaving his father open to an attack at any moment from a treacherous foe, whom he might still go on believing to be a loyal ally.

¹ *Sirkar*, the supreme authority, the Government.

At last Mohamed Khan spoke thus. "Lo! I am the only son of my father; he speaks to me all that is in his heart, for he says that I soon will be a man. I know what thoughts he has towards your people; and often has he spoken to me of your father and your father's greatness. I know that in his heart he thinks highly of you, and that he was very loth to lay this plot against you, and would have thought not at all of any such deed, had he not been urged thereto by holy men. It may be that when I return and tell him that I have accomplished nothing, that he will be angry; it may indeed be that he will beat me; but in his heart he will forgive me and rejoice. And, oh Sahib, every day I grow stronger, and my father weaker, for he is old and sickness takes hold of him often, whereas each day I grow taller and shoot straighter with my rifle, so that the men of my father's tribe daily honour me more and obey me more readily. I know, indeed, that though I am now a child, yet very quickly shall I be the leader of all those that wait for me now in yonder *nullah*. Since now the Sahib has spared me, I will return, taking them with me. To them I will say that the Sahibs have returned to the fort and that nothing is to be seen of any of them, save only the fragments from their feast. To my father I will tell all. And, oh Great One, though I love my father, yet do I now swear to you, that should he not hearken to my petition and consent to leave you unharmed so long as he shall live, then assuredly will I slay him with my hands. And I, on my part promise, that never again will I lift my hand against the Sirkar. But, oh Sahib, I too love my father. Spare him then, and tell to your father naught of all this matter; else will my father surely be ruined by your father's wrath, and by the

might of the Sirkar's armies. Say then, oh Sahib, what is in your heart."

"It is well," answered Bobby; "I consent. You shall return to your father; neither you nor he shall ever again seek to hurt my father, and of this matter I will tell him nothing."

Then Mohamed Khan unloosed his Afghan knife from his belt, and handing it to Bobby in its scabbard, gave it to him as a keepsake and as a pledge of the treaty that day ratified. And Bobby, casting about him, found somewhere deep in a trouser-pocket a six-bladed, ivory-handled treasure of a knife, and this he gave to Mohamed Khan.

Then with a low *salaam* Mohamed Khan was gone, and Bobby, with Dodo at his heels, and hiding his new knife inside his waistcoat, retraced his steps across the *nullah*, and went back to his father and the shooting-party.

And since the afternoon was waning, and there was little hope of more sport, the party rode back slowly to the fort. And Bobby let the reins lie loose on Badshah's neck and sat silent and deep in thought, so that all supposed him to be weary with the toils of the day. And Dodo trailed behind him silently, and Mal Singh's face was very long, as he strode

behind carrying his master's gun for the last time. And his father rode alongside gloomily, thinking of to-morrow's parting.

But a weight was off Bobby's mind. Hitherto the future had been a dreary blank and had frightened him. But that morning, when he had shot the *ubara*, he had felt some of that feeling of exultation that fears no to-morrow. And now, as he thought upon what had since happened, he realised in a vague way that he had saved his father and his friends from a grave danger, and surely to have done this formed a fit ending to his Indian life. So it was with a stout heart that, as his father wished him good-night, as he lay dog-tired in bed with Dodo at his feet, he murmured heavy-eyed and half asleep: "Father, I am glad I am going to school."

Then his father wondered that his son should be so brave, so callous, or so philosophical. And none at Simla or at the India Office ever knew that at Brighton, in the lowest form of Dr. Jones's preparatory school, there struggled daily over the oblique cases of *musa* one who had held a grave frontier-question in the hollow of his hand, and grappled it with masterly acumen, firmness, tact, and success.

POWELL MILLINGTON.

ENGLISH SURNAMES.

IF in many ways not easily overlooked the past is wont to reassert itself in the present, there are directions in which the two are so closely mixed that we do not notice the former, though it may be well worth recognition. Thus, amidst the multiplied and complicated pursuits of modern life, we are daily in unconscious touch with the fewer and simpler matters that exercised the brains and fingers of our forefathers in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; for in a shape no less familiar than that of the surnames in constant use to-day, the English occupations of those bygone ages are largely represented. But who observes the ancient fact affirmed in the current designation? Who in naming the author of *VANITY FAIR* thinks of his descent from some plain north-country thatcher of stack and cottage? Who recognises in the Jenners, now of life-saving repute, the offspring of those whose business it once was to destroy life, the *ginours*, or engineers, who served the catapults in medieval war? Yet there is surely some interest in realising the origins of the names we hear everywhere about us. In the following pages I have quoted a few of the names derived from the occupations pursued in the later Middle-Ages. As the period supplying the specimens was one of frequent conflicts, I have chosen first some reminders of medieval battle; after which a small selection of surnames expressing peaceful industries and recreations will be briefly considered.

The registers that have been preserved at Somerset House since 1837

furnish what seems at first sight to be a very complete series of surnames connected with war. Supplying in the first place that invariable cause of hostilities, Quarrell, they lead on to Allies, Challenge, Charge, Battle, Greatbattle, Rout, Victory, and Conquest. They proceed, as it would appear, to enumerate in detail the ghastly results of conflict, in the names Gash, Gore, Slaughter, Carnage, and Corps; and seem to furnish particulars of war-material in Powder, Bullet, Shott, Shell, Cannon, Sword, and Lance. They mention too the Gunner, and further specify his deadly charges in Cannister and Grape, recalling the ingenious (rather than ingenuous) argument founded upon them by the tippling Lieutenant Luff, that tea and wine are equally destructive. Few, however, of these surnames have anything directly to do with warfare, and only one,—Gunner—commemorates a military calling. This name, too, is apparently the sole mark made on our registers by the primitive firearms of the fourteenth century, which seem indeed generally to have barked more than they bit, and to have been especially harmless towards the enemy. The name Cannon is not military but ecclesiastical. It is known to point to one of the bound religious orders, the title of which, had its members kept their vows, would not appear among hereditary surnames. Battle itself owns but indirect relationship to war. It was merely the distinguishing description applied to migrants from the Sussex village that has borne that name since "might made right eight hundred years ago."

Of the other surnames quoted, some,—those, for instance, designating weapons—have been recognised as nicknames; and the rest are probably corruptions.

Many nevertheless are the true representatives of medieval crafts and callings connected with warfare. Of Jenner and Gunner, already mentioned, the latter necessarily dates from more recent days, while the former may have become hereditary much earlier. Some genuine war-surnames have been to all appearance removed from the military list by corruptive influences, just as false ones by the same means seem to have been placed upon it. There is, for example, Alabaster, which has probably caused much speculation as to how the decorative substance, formerly often seen under glass in drawing-rooms, can have foisted its name upon family nomenclature. In this disguise, however, which affords an example of what may be called constructive corruption,—the joint work of imagination and illiteracy—lurks no other than the medieval cross-bow-man or arbalester, who, sometimes mounted and sometimes afoot, equipped with his rather cumbrous arbalest, and his quiver of fifty short thick arrows, or quarrels, was so important a factor in the battles of the thirteenth century. The *balistraria*, those narrow apertures through which these warriors discharged their darts, are familiar features in old military architecture. There are Arblasters among us whose less corrupted designation describes their ancestors more intelligibly than that just mentioned; and also Bolsters and Blasts who are held to be of like descent, and whose names therefore need not suggest bed-furniture and wintry winds. But the famed archers of England are otherwise and more familiarly referred to cognominally, as are the crafts of bow

and arrow-making. Most of us have met with Archers and Bowmans whose fathers wielded perhaps the long-bow of the fourteenth century, perhaps the earlier and less convenient weapons. Bowyers, as well as Bowers and Boyers, are within the circle of many people's acquaintance; and these alike represent the medieval bow-maker, the craftsman in yew, elm, ash, or wych-hazel; while the Arrowsmiths, and according to one authority¹ the Arsmiths also, point to the workers who shaped the steel arrow-heads, and the Stringers to the manipulators of hemp, flax, catgut, and sinew in the making of strings both for the bows, and for some of the heavier engines of war. The Fletchers, whose name has sometimes been set down as derived from the French *flèche* (an arrow), and has been held therefore to refer to arrow-makers generally, are apparently more rightly regarded as descended from those formerly engaged on the specific task of fledging or feathering arrows, which they usually did with slips cut from the wings of a goose. The Fletchers, by the way, are said to have attracted to their more agreeable surname some of the Fleshers, a north-country race who, with the Butchers of Norman descent, and the imported Labouchères, were ancestrally concerned with slaughter other than that for which the Fletchers helped to prepare the instruments. Tipper and Setter are explained as having been the respective denominations of the forgers of the arrow-point, and of the workman who fastened the point to the shaft. Both words survive as surnames; and they put a finish to the cognominal account of arrow-making, as those they describe did to the arrows.

¹OUR ENGLISH SURNAMES; by C. W. Bardsley. The writer is much indebted to this interesting book.

The ages mainly concerned in the settling of family names having been among those in which hand-to-hand fighting was a more prominent feature of battle than it can be in these days of Lyddite, Maxims, and Lee-Metfords, they called forth much attention to defensive armour, then of real service. It is apparently in surnames affording general descriptions that the many workers who supplied the consequent demand must chiefly be sought. The Armourers, Armours (armers) and Armorys,¹ also with some reservation the Smiths, may be recognised as descendants of the men who, at different dates and according to many fashions prevalent within the centuries in question, wrought the suits of ring or plate-armour, the varying shapes of helmet, vizor, and skull-cap, of shield, greaves, poleyns, and vambraces. But surnames touch more explicitly on the equipment for personal encounter, and for the offensive as well as the defensive part of it, when they take us from the workshop to the field of battle. Not only do they show us in Jackman the wearer of the coat of mail, but they similarly point out the bearer of pike, spear, &c. There is, it would seem, but one weapon of importance in close fighting the separate manufacture of which is referred to cognominally, but that is the most important of all, the sword. Sworder is a not uncommon family name describing the forgers of the blade. Less frequent is Sheather; but this too may be met with, and is a relic of the men who in old days shaped the scabbard for the destructive instrument that still symbolises "war and waste" in general. It seems to suggest here that we put by our military surnames, and produce a few relating to civil callings.

¹ The final "y" is an old appendage, fanciful or familiar, to many surnames.

On a general consideration of what has already been said, it will be seen that the names significant of old pursuits by no means furnish main descriptions only, but are also largely specific. If, therefore, we can for a moment imagine our surnames as having remained merely personal up to the present time, and as beginning under existing conditions to settle into hereditary permanence, we shall realise what an enormous accession to the numbers of those created by occupations, multitudinous as they are already, must have come about owing to the minute subdivisions of labour which distinguish the industrial methods of these days. Every one of the countless local and familiar terms expressing different minutiae of manufacturing toil as it now proceeds, terms constantly used by the toilers to describe themselves orally and in writing, among comrades and employers as well as in the register and the census-schedule, would have been liable to pass into permanent surnames. To take a simple example:—instead of the group of half a dozen names now existing relative to the medieval miller and mill, we should, under the conditions supposed, have probably acquired by means of the numerous steam flour-mill companies employing many men variously busied and described, a lengthy list designating several grades of officials from the Managers downwards, to the Grinders, Loftmen, Storemen, Spoutmen, Loaders, &c. In the case of the great industries the operation of the multiplying process would of course have been much more strongly marked.

The ancient flax-manufacture has supplied many of the particularising surnames which have been imagined as arising in increased numbers out of the prevalent specialism of modern industrial procedure. There are not only the cognomen Flaxman,—now

of artistic rather than manufacturing association—to commemorate the medieval flax-workers in general, and Lyner descriptive of the medieval dealers in manufactured linen; Scotcher is also to be found, with its modified Scutcher, and its familiarised Scutchery, each telling of the process, now performed for the most part by machinery, of separating the woody from the fibrous part of the line-plant. There are, too, among us Hacklers and Hecklers representing forefathers who with the hatchel, or hackle, combed out the filaments of the flax so as to reduce them to their finest fibres, a process fitly lending its name to a serious mental and moral operation sometimes undergone by human subjects. And again there are the Blackers whose progenitors also had to do with a subordinate, but not unimportant, proceeding in the preparation of linen for the market. These workers were not, as their description suggests, concerned in sullyng the useful material, but rather in rendering it more fair. They were in short the *bleachers* of the woven linen. Our family name-system certainly possesses singular powers. It can affirm without mendacity that Two and Two do not make four; by the simple agency of marriage it can convert a Round into a Square,—a process not easily distinguishable from squaring the circle; and here it is able to maintain under strict cross-questioning the paradoxical position that black and white are identical. The surname Whiter survives, and describes exactly the same occupation as Blacker; but the riddle is solved in the explanation that “the Anglo-Saxon *blac*, unaccented, means black, while *blæc* signifies pale or white, and the derivative verb *blæcian* to bleach or make pale.”¹

¹ Lower's PATRONYMICA BRITANNICA: art. *Blaker*, *Blacker*.

The surnames created by the manufacture of wool, the original great staple of the country, are found also to describe many details of the industry. While general denominations, from Woolman and Stapler to Draper, Clothier, and Taylor, appear in the registers, these are supplemented by numerous names denoting particulars of the manufacture. Among them are Comber and Carder telling of a preparatory treatment of the raw material answering to that of heckling in the case of flax; Spinner and Spinster which speak for themselves; and Webb, Webber, and Webster of frequent occurrence, representing the medieval weavers. Here too the Walkers come in, whose ancestors were pedestrians in a sense little less monotonous, though much more honourable, than that in which the term applies to convicts on the treadmill. They patiently accomplished by treading the thickening or felting of the manufactured cloth, the operation that turns to full account the singular curly, elastic, and scaly properties of wool-fibre by pressing the woven material till its threads become firmly bound together in numberless subtle knots. Fullers there are in abundance, as well as Walkers, who represent similar work effected by the same means; for the fulling-mill, now in its turn superseded by more delicate machinery, was not used till the middle of the fifteenth century, by which time, although it cannot be said that the door was even then closed against their increase, surnames had for the most part taken hereditary form.

In similar detail are the operations of many another industry of old days kept in mind in the columns of the registers. The smiter on the anvil whose familiar generic description Smith,—already spoken of as in part applying to the armourer—has fur-

nished the commonest English surname, has also originated at least twenty others, expressing by prefixes the several branches of his occupation; as Nasmyth representing the nail-maker, Shoosmith the horse-shoemaker, Sixsmith the sickle-maker, &c.; while corresponding distinctions abound in the surnames describing those humblest of rural labourers the "minders" of live-stock, for not only are these countrymen represented among us by the Herds and Hurds, but also in such names as Calvert, Colthart, Coward, Hoggart, Sheppard, Stothert and many others, in which the last syllable must be read as *herd* (keeper) in spite of variations of spelling, the first representing the kind of animal tended.

With some exceptions, and one notable one furnished by the pursuit of hunting, pastimes have not, like the graver occupations of life, divided themselves into sections likely to confer separate titles on their votaries and furnishers. There are, however, surnames enough in existence to supply a record of the general features of sport in the Middle Ages. The names Butt and Archer recall the fact that medieval games consisted largely in preparation for war by practice in marksmanship. The former describes those who set up targets in the fields and closes provided for archery practice; and the latter either may point to the marksman distinguished in civil competitions, or may as already shown be a description of military service. In Hunter, Buckmaster, Venner, and many other names, the aristocratic diversion of the chase is commemorated both through its devotees and their servants. Todhunter should send a thrill of horror through the frame of the modern sportsman, as it celebrates the destroyer of the tod, or fox, which was treated as vermin when family surnames were coming into use, the

deer being then the huntsman's game. The Falconers abound everywhere to recall the hawk-tamers and trainers who were greatly in demand by the upper classes after Norman usage had given its great impulse to English falconry. As will be remembered, their name, very variously spelt, has for the most part shrunk into a dissyllable, and usually retains the French "u."

If it be true that the prototype of cricket was practised in the fourteenth century, and if devotion to the pastime had then been so ardent and so productive of professionals as now, cognominal traces of the game might certainly be expected. A quest for such traces might seem to be rewarded by the promising surnames Batman, Bowler, and Fielder, each of which may be found in register and directory; but even if club-ball furnished such terms, the three names are shown to bear meanings quite unconnected with that sport. The first describes a boatman, the second a turner of rough wooden vessels, and the third a dweller in the meadows. Should anyone be disappointed at failing to trace a long descent for our prime English game, he may take comfort from considering what surnames signify less wholesome forms of sport that are happily now extinct. Bearman, Berward, and Bullard, for example, recall the brutal amusements of the bull-ring and bear-pit, as Cocker points to the cock-fighter, whose occupation, however, survived till a time within the nineteenth century that men yet living may remember. Wiseman, on the contrary, refers to a harmless entertainer, being commemorative of the conjuror at fairs and wakes, a personage still familiar enough, as is also the Player, who "strutted and fretted his hour" upon the medieval stage on similar occasions, with only village-green or market-place for scenic accessories.

Our nation has often been set down as unmusical ; but surnames go far to show the wide acceptance of minstrelsy as a recreation in the England of the later Middle Ages. If indeed the numerous quasi-musical terms found among family names could safely be put in evidence, the testimony against the charge would be overwhelming. Unfortunately the Harmonys and Melodys, the Anthems, Chants, Ballads, and Gleees, the Flats and Sharps, Trebles and Basses, the Organs, Harps, Lutes, Horns, Fiddles, Drums, and Fifes of the registers cannot without great hesitation be called into the witness-box. A large number of these names must doubtless be classed, like many others already quoted, as mere corruptions ; though some, originally applied as nicknames, may have a reference to musical acquirements. But there remain sufficient trustworthy witnesses to the popular appreciation of musical entertainment. There is Gleeman, for instance, pointing to the itinerant vocalists of the Middle Ages who were always sure of a welcome in hall and bower, with respect to which name it is to be remembered that *glee* originally meant music or minstrelsy in general, not a particular form of it. The Sangers and Sangsters are also representative of the same class. Then there are the Crowthers and Crowders who in the old days drew forth melodies, more or less sweet, from the *crowd* or *crwth*, a primitive violin, and the Fiddlers and Vidlers, whose ancestors performed on instruments of much

the same fashion. It is interesting to learn from musical history that these popular musicians went far to anticipate by intuition the musical truth and freedom of much later days, while the monks, who were the accredited teachers of the art, long lagged behind, hampered by scales of ecclesiastical tradition which were arbitrary and misleading. To add one more surname of true musical origin where many must be left unnoticed, we may set down Harper, representing specially favoured performers,—often probably, like the crowders, hailing from Wales,—in the popular concerts of five hundred years ago.

Of the family names quoted in this paper many seem out of place in their proper connection, on account of incongruous associations lately acquired by them. Sanger, for example, has probably even now suggested to some readers the circus and the clown, and, if they be Londoners, Sangster has likely enough reminded them of umbrellas ; but the name Harper can create no such confusion, though, in the hands of the well-known musicians who have borne it in our own day,

The harp a king had loved to hear

has been exchanged for another instrument. It would be strange if the mutations of life were so constant as to admit of no such congruities as are thus occasionally shown between the pursuits men follow now, and the ancestral capabilities expressed in the surnames they inherit.

EDWARD WHITAKER.

IN LAVENGRO'S COUNTRY.

I HAD heard at Lowestoft that the old house at Oulton in which George Borrow had lived,—that old white-fronted house amid the rugged firs—had been pulled down; but I was comforted to hear, at the same time, that the summer-house in which he wrote *LAVENGRO* and *THE BIBLE IN SPAIN* was still standing in the grounds of the modern villa now occupying the site of his old home. So, on a bright December morning, when a boisterous sea-breeze was buffeting the heathery cliffs of easternmost England, and the rush of the wind up the Lowestoft scores¹ was of almost Arctic keenness, I set out for Oulton, bent on exploring some of the lanes and by-roads so often traversed by the Walking Lord of Gipsy Lore. Leaving the town by the Beccles road, I soon found my path bordered by freshly-ploughed fields, where white-breasted, grey-winged gulls were as plentiful as rooks amid the furrows; while from every hedgerow flocks of chirping sparrows rose with a loud whirring of wings. Though the wind was so keen, the winter until that morning had been one of unusual mildness; and the russet leaves still hanging on the roadside oaks, the blooming of red dead nettle, pimpernel, and speedwell in the unploughed corners, betokened the approach of a green Christmas. Even insect-life was still to be seen; flies were creeping listlessly about a sun-warmed, ivy-covered wall, and in a high-hedged lane, beside

a copse of leafless elms and birches, a little swarm of gnats was dancing in the aerial path of a winter sunbeam. An Oulton broadsman, who overtook me a little way out of the town, commented on the open weather which was helping us on to Christmas; but he added that in these parts they had their winter during the first three months of the new year.

Near Oulton Broad station, where the broadsman left me, I turned to the right down a narrow winding road, which, after I had passed a row of cottages which have sprung up since Borrow's time, skirts the tract of waste upland where his Roman friends so often had their camping-ground. I call it waste land, and it was waste land twenty years ago; but the term scarcely applies to it now, for it has become an unsightly building-estate, dotted with groups and terraces of little red houses which Borrow, if he could see them, would, I am convinced, compare unfavourably with the brightly-painted travelling vans and kraal-shaped blanket-tents of Mr. Petulengro and his tribe. A little further on I discovered that the fine old tithe-barn had disappeared, the barn through the gaping holes of whose ruined roof the red light of the Broadland sunsets used to glow, till the rafters looked like the charred relics of a conflagration; but the splendid black poplars which were planted many years before Borrow was born, still stretched their huge rugged arms over the neighbouring road. The lane leading to the little church,—a lane so hedged with holly bushes and overarched by closely

¹ Scores (Anglo-Saxon, *scoren*, a cleft) are steep narrow lanes, leading down from the top of the cliffs to the seashore.

interwoven branches that even in winter, when only the hollies are not leafless, it is as gloomy as a crypt—that, too, was unchanged; but when I approached the clump of firs whose mournful music on stormy nights reminded Borrow of the days when he went gipsying, a change, for which, in spite of what I had heard, I was not prepared, revealed itself.

In 1840, when, after several years' journeying in Russia, France, Austria, and Spain, George Borrow, at the age of thirty-seven, married and settled down at Oulton, Oulton Cottage was an isolated house, less accessible by land than by water, on the reedy verge of Oulton Broad. At that time the Norfolk Broads were, so to say, undiscovered, except by the draw-netters, eel-catchers, reed-cutters, and gunners who dwelt among them and relied on their abundant wild life for a livelihood. The only boats which sailed the quiet waters were the trading wherries which carried cargoes of coal, corn, and timber between the coast and the inland towns, and the little brown-sailed punts of the flight-shooters and fishermen. Hardly anyone, unless he were an angler or a gunner, thought of visiting these lowland meres for recreation; even at the time of Borrow's death, which occurred more than forty years after he first came to live here, very few yachts or wherries had been built for the special purpose of cruising on these inland waters. Much less had enterprising land-owners and speculative builders realised that the heathy and corn-clad uplands overlooking the Broads and river valleys were excellent sites for villas: the men who had their homes on these uplands were, for the most part, farm-hands or those whose livelihood was gained among the meres and marshes. In the reed-beds, of which there was then a wide belt

almost wholly surrounding Oulton Broad, the rare and beautiful little bearded titmouse nested; its musical call-note, like the clashing of fairy cymbals, being heard there all the year through. Not infrequently the booming of a bittern brought the Oulton and Carlton Colville gunners to those dense jungles; on the adjoining marshlands, where the sails of innumerable wooden windmills whirled whenever the dykes were filled with flood-water, large flocks of wild-fowl settled during the winter months. The wailing of the white-breasted lapwing and the piping of the redshank were familiar sounds to everyone who laboured on those fenny lowlands, where the heron stood sentinel by the dykesides, and the reeling of the shy grasshopper warblers went on all summer amid the lush marsh grass.

To-day the railroad runs within a hundred yards of the site of Oulton Cottage, and on the uplands which overlook the hollow in which the cottage stood are several glaringly new houses whose erection banished for ever that native wildness which was the chief charm of the northern end of Oulton Broad. Down by the waterside, where a scanty fringe of rushes represents the old reedy haunts of the bearded titmice, are other red brick villas. Smooth lawns and symmetrically designed gardens have taken the place of sedgy margins where the coot and water-hen nested and the water-ragwort displayed its brilliant blossoms. From the uplands, which were once open rabbit-haunted warrens, smoothly rolled gravelled walks lead down to the road which connects this new resort of successful citizens with the Oulton road. The Broad itself has altered little, except that the clearing away of some of its old reed-beds has added slightly to its navigable area; but the scene it

presents on a summer day is very different from that which Borrow saw from the windows of his waterside home. True, the brown-sailed wherries are as numerous as ever, and on any day of the year, save when the waters are ice-bound, one or more of these characteristic craft may be seen sailing up or down the Broad. Occasionally, too, a glimpse may be caught of a fisherman's gun-punt; but where only brown sails were visible forty years ago the white canvas of innumerable smart yachts, pleasure-wherries, and racing cutters gleams in the sunlight. For Oulton has become one of the chief yachting centres of the Broads, and all sorts and conditions of holiday-makers now seek rest and recreation on the inland waters which were once unexplored except by the local wherryman, fisherman, and wild-fowlers.

The house which occupies the site of Oulton Cottage stands at the head of a small inlet still known as Borrow's Ham, and although several other houses have arisen near it, its immediate surroundings have not altered to the degree one might at the first glance imagine. The rugged firs which overshadowed the cottage still spread their dusky plumes over the old lawn; just beyond them is a small reed-fringed pool in which a few active little coots find sanctuary. There, too, the chuckling of sedge-warblers may be heard when the end of April comes and the plucky little brown birds return from the banks of the African rivers to their English haunts; not infrequently the loiterer by the pool's side hears the bleating of a snipe. Tits, buntings, and finches are quite as plentiful around the Broad as ever they were; even the crested grebe is sometimes, though rarely, seen breasting the wind-ruffled waters. But the human dwellers by the Broad are a people who knew not

Borrow; therefore it is the more to their credit that when his old home was demolished they preserved the quaint little summer-house which was his writing-room and study for so many years.

It stands on the verge of the lawn in the shadow of the pines. Ivy has enfolded it in its close embrace and crept up to the peak of its conical roof. It is an octagonal structure, somewhat larger than the average summer-house, and its windows command a charming view of the Broad. It is quite a century old, and after Borrow's death it was for a long time neglected and allowed to fall into decay. But now it is in good hands; its interior has been restored, and if only it contained Borrow's philological library, and his father's sword still hung on its wall, it would look much the same as when he used it. Even at this season of the year, when the amber reeds have grey feathery plumes and chill mists often rise from the Broad, it would be a warm and pleasant retreat. When Jasper Petulengro and his gipsy friends came to call on Borrow, and were ushered into this little summer-house, they must have felt as much at home here as in their own tents, and the voice of the wind among the pines would remind them of their sheltered camping-grounds.

In spite of the changes which have taken place around the summer-house it is not difficult to realise that Oulton Cottage was an ideal home for a child of the open air, and Borrow, who, when disappointed and disillusioned by his privations in London, took to the gipsy's life and set up his tent in the Mumper's Dingle, ought to have been here the happiest of men. The abundant wild life of the Broad and the marshes should have provided him with a wide field of observation; the isolation of his retreat should

have added, and undoubtedly did add to the charm the place had for him.

But in spite of his being often compared with Thoreau it has always seemed to me that, though he was a lover of nature and solitude, he was not a naturalist. A child of the open air he undoubtedly was; but then there was that umbrella, "manifold and bulging, gigantic and green," which to Dr. Hake was the most damning evidence against Borrow's being a genuine worshipper of Nature. The works of man, his history and legends, the prowess of a pugilist, a good horse, and the record of an East Anglian worthy would always arouse his enthusiasm; but of wild birds, beasts, and flowers he had little knowledge. In LAVENGRO he speaks of the choughs continually circling about the spire of Norwich cathedral, when, no doubt, he is referring to the jackdaws: he calls the planet Jupiter a star; and he writes a book descriptive of wide journeyings in Spain without telling us anything worth knowing of the wild life of that country. Humanity always interested him more than birds and flowers; during his travels in Wild Wales he was always on the look-out for roadside inns, and desirous of hobnobbing with their rustic frequenters. The gipsies' horse-dealing transactions, and the philological puzzles of their ancient language, occupied his mind and pen for hours together; but he leaves it to a Romany *chal* to describe the charm of the gipsies' open-air and roving life, contenting himself with setting down the rover's words without comment. True, he would seem to imply that the sun, moon, and stars, and the wind on the heath were as much to him as to Jasper Petulengro; but when he stood on a Welsh mountain-top, where, one would think, the wide outlook would have inspired him, he only sees a fitting

opportunity for pompous declamation. Who, too, but Borrow, when he dwelt in the dingle and enjoyed, under such romantic circumstances, the companionship of that charming nomadic Amazon, Isopel Berners, would have failed to appreciate the novelty and romance of his position, and would have persecuted the poor girl with his chatter about the Armenian language? As Mr. Birrell says, one "longs to shake him" for it. In WILD WALES he mentions that one day he and his family (that is, his wife and step-daughter) took a stroll up the side of Berwyn "for the purpose of botanising;" but what botanist, after reading his works from beginning to end, can help doubting whether Borrow knew a mountain cranesbill from a bog pimpernel?

Not content with the evidence of his own works, I turned to the LIFE OF GEORGE BORROW, in which Professor Knapp prints a considerable number of Borrow's letters, chiefly written while he was at Oulton; but I searched in vain for any indication that he was an observer of the prolific wild life of the Broads. True, he sometimes went a-fishing; but he tells us nothing about the sport he had in landing the Oulton pike. In LAVENGRO he remarks that as a young man he "had an attachment to the angle, ay, and to the gun likewise;" but his idea of sport scarcely commends itself, for he says that when he went out shooting he "seldom returned at night without a string of bullfinches, blackbirds, and linnets hanging in triumph [!] round [his] neck." And in the next paragraph, in regretting the shortness of the English winter, he says he "speaks as a fowler"!

Concerning his home life, occupations, and pastimes at Oulton he was always strangely reticent, a fact the more surprising in view of the

freedom with which he related the encounters, adventures, and occupations of his earlier years. But in one of his prefaces, where he describes how he commenced writing *THE BIBLE IN SPAIN*, he gives us a glimpse of how he passed his days.

At first I proceeded slowly—sickness was in the land, and the face of nature was overcast—heavy rain-clouds swam in the heavens,—the blast howled amid the pines which nearly surround my lonely dwelling, and the waters of the lake which lies before it, so quiet in general and tranquil, were fearfully agitated. . . . A dreary summer and autumn passed by, and were succeeded by as gloomy a winter. [To a true lover of Nature no summer, autumn, or winter should have been dreary or gloomy.] I still proceeded with *THE BIBLE IN SPAIN*. The winter passed, and spring came with cold dry winds and occasional sunshine, whereupon I arose, shouted, and mounting my horse, even Sidi Habismilk, I scoured all the surrounding district, and thought but little of *THE BIBLE IN SPAIN*. So I rode about the country, over the heaths, and through the green lanes of my native land, occasionally visiting friends at a distance, and sometimes, for variety's sake [!], I stayed at home and amused myself by catching huge pike, which lie perdue in certain deep ponds skirted by lofty reeds, upon my land Then came a summer with much heat and sunshine, and then I would lie for hours in the sun and recall the sunny days I had spent in Andalusia, and my thoughts were continually reverting to Spain, and at last I remembered that *THE BIBLE IN SPAIN* was still unfinished, whereupon I arose, and said: This loitering profiteth nothing,—and I hastened to my summer-house by the side of the lake, and there I thought and wrote, and every day I repaired to the same place, and thought and wrote until I had finished *THE BIBLE IN SPAIN*.

But if Borrow was no naturalist, he had a keen appreciation of rural scenery. Innumerable passages in his books prove this. His descriptions lack that insight into details which constitutes the charm of Thoreau and Richard Jefferies; but no writer more

quickly and clearly conveys to the reader a vivid impression of the scene he wishes to depict. And that the impression made upon him by a lovely landscape remained with him, even though years had passed since he saw it, is obvious from the vividness with which he could call up in his Oulton summer-house the scenes he had visited in his boyhood.

Few people now living in Oulton, I found, remembered Borrow, though barely twenty years had passed since he dwelt among them. During the latter years of his life he seldom welcomed visitors or sought the companionship of his neighbours. In 1869, after his wife's death in London, he returned here, as he said, to die; and, although his death did not occur until twelve years later, he was from that time dead to the world in which he had been a unique and striking figure. At times, wrapped in the voluminous cloak which had been his constant companion in Spain, and wearing a broad-brimmed hat which almost concealed his face, he would wander along the lonesome lanes and by-roads around his isolated home; but he seldom spoke to the people he met in his rambles and who eyed him curiously as he passed. Occasionally he was visited by one or two of his old friends; but that his desire for solitude was generally recognised and regarded is evident from a letter written to him by Edward FitzGerald, who at that time often stayed in Lowestoft. FitzGerald was one of the few men whom Borrow, in his latter days, was not averse to meeting, and it was in response to an invitation to Oulton Cottage that he wrote to Borrow:

My nephew Kerrich told me of a very kind invitation you sent to me, through him, some while ago. I think the more of it because I imagine, from what I have heard, that you have slunk away from

human company as much as I have! Are you not glad now to be alone, and find company a heavier burden than the grasshopper? If one ever had this solitary habit, it is not likely to alter for the better as one grows older—as one grows *old*.

I was loth to leave the old summer-house among the pines, for in it I could almost feel the presence of Lavengro and his Romany friends. It was easy to conjure up a vision of the tall, white-haired wanderer who so often mused within its wooden walls, and see his dreamy eyes brighten as the strange greeting, "*Kosko divvus*, brother," announces the approach of one of the swarthy *chals* from the neighbouring heath. And along the narrow footpath which leads to the old church with the

square, brick-topped tower I seemed to walk side by side with the Walking Lord of Gipsy Lore. As the dusk descended upon the marshlands, and the night-mists gathered over the dykes and river, I still thought of him of whom it was said, "His enthusiasm for nature was peculiar; he could draw more poetry from a wide-spreading marsh with its straggling rushes than from the most beautiful scenery, and would stand and look at it with rapture." For there, on those breezy uplands overlooking the marshes, he often stood and dreamed of the days when he dwelt in the Mumper's Dingle and his chosen friends were the Children of the Open Air.

WILLIAM A. DUTT.

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION :

ITS HISTORY, CHARACTER, AND POSSIBILITIES.

AUSTRALIAN Federation is really a re-action from Australian Separation. England from the first had found it difficult to realise the geographical and circumstantial differences that parted the young colonies. No two colonies could well have been more dissimilar in origin than New South Wales and South Australia, for example, and it was inevitable that each should desire to mould its own destinies. But if England was prone to underestimate the actual distance, Australia was inclined to ignore the relative nearness of her component colonies. The noble lord who, when asked where South Australia was, replied "somewhere near Botany Bay," was no doubt from the positive standpoint inaccurate, for a distance of five or six hundred miles can hardly be held to constitute nearness ; relatively speaking, however, he was perfectly right. So far as political, social, and commercial life are concerned, South Australia, despite those five or six hundred miles, is assuredly somewhere near New South Wales ; and there is, in proportion, about as much intercourse to-day between Sydney and Melbourne, or between Sydney and Adelaide, as there is between Manchester and Liverpool.

The idea of Australian Federation is English in its origin, and it is Lord Grey and not Sir Henry Parkes to whom most legitimately belongs the title of the Father of Federation. It is not, of course, to be supposed that this conscientious, but unpopular, states-

man, the peculiar aversion of Wakefield and other progressive spirits, was possessed of such political prescience as to have foreseen the actual lines of Federal development. But so early as 1847 we find him writing : "Some method will be devised for enabling the legislatures of the several Australian colonies to co-operate with each other in the enactment of such laws as may be necessary for regulating the interests common to those possessions collectively,—such, for example, as the imposition of duties of import and export, the conveyance of letters, &c.;" and he speaks of the "Creation of a central legislative authority for the whole of the Australian Colonies." Australia, however, indignantly rejected his suggestions. "*Non tali auxilio*," she cried, and she cried rightly. Any scheme for Australian union, to be acceptable to Australians, must emanate from Australia herself. Nothing speaks more highly for the tact of the authorities at home,—who, for all the hard things that have been said of them in Australia, have on the whole deserved conspicuously well both of England and of the Colonies—than the fact that the Government at once gave way, leaving the Colonies to re-discover for themselves, in the fulness of time, the absolute necessity of a central Legislative Assembly, if Australia were ever to be more than a term of geographical convenience. "Australia for the Australians" is at least an intelligible cry ; but "Australia

for the New South Welshmen," "the Victorians," or "the South Australians" is a cry of provincialism only possible in the infancy of national history.

Although a detailed scheme for a central Australian Assembly was submitted to the English Parliament and fully discussed there, the Act providing for the separation of Victoria was eventually passed without any of the Federal clauses. It was, however, anticipated in England that the Colonies would of themselves gradually combine for legislative purposes much sooner than was actually the case. The Governor of New South Wales had for many years the official title of Governor-General of Australia. But the implied hegemony of the mother-colony was distasteful to the younger members of the Australian family, and after 1861 this shadow of a pious aspiration towards Federal Union was entirely removed.

Meanwhile there were not wanting Australian statesmen who, while distrusting the advances of Lord Grey and his colleagues, were by no means insensible to the advantages of a Federation, if they might have the devising of it. The Reverend Dr. Lang, a Presbyterian minister, produced in 1852 a complete scheme of Federal Union, together with what some considered, and still consider, its logical consequence, complete separation from England; and W. C. Wentworth, a prominent figure in early Australian politics, soon became a partial convert to his views, drafting a bill, and submitting it in 1857 to Mr. Labouchere, the Secretary of State for the Colonies. That gentleman, however, judged, not unreasonably, that the scheme was premature. Select committees were held through the influence of Messrs. Gavan Duffy and Deas Thomson in the same year in Victoria, in New South Wales, and

also in South Australia. But inter-colonial distrust was already a political fact; and the tendency to decentralisation was increased by the separation of Queensland two years later. The zealots for Federation, notably Mr. Duffy, did not allow themselves to be discouraged, and endeavoured for many years to pave the way to Federal Union by the adoption of a uniform tariff; but beyond a series of inter-colonial conferences to settle special questions where from time to time common agreement was necessary, little progress was made.

In 1867, at the most important of these conferences, Mr. (not yet Sir) Henry Parkes eloquently announced his faith in Federation. "I believe," he said, "that this occasion will inevitably lead to a more permanent Federal understanding. I do not mean to say that when you leave this room to-night you will see a new constellation of six stars in the heavens. I do not startle your imagination by asking you to look for the footprints of six young giants in the morning dew, when the night rolls away; but this I feel certain of, that the Mother-country will regard this congress of the Colonies just in the same light as a father and mother may view the conduct of their children when they first observe those children beginning to look out for homes and connections for themselves." But for a long time, partly through the action of the Home Government, partly through the internal difficulties of united action, the prophecy seemed but the utterance of a visionary enthusiast. In 1881 Parkes himself declared his conviction that the time was not yet come for the construction of a Federal Constitution, but advocated the immediate creation of a non-fiscal Federal Council. This Council actually came into being in 1885, but its limited powers, and the abstention of New South Wales,

made it a halting creature from the first, and at its death at Melbourne in 1899 it was little missed.

That ultimate human question, "Of us two, am I to kill you, or you me?" is as applicable to nations as to individuals. It is the instinct of self-preservation that has promoted most political agreements. While the Australian Colonies seemed enabled by their aloofness to lead an easy life without concerning themselves with European nations, Federation remained a dream in the minds of statesmen. But when rumours of war came to the golden continent, when French and German activity in the Pacific warned Australian colonists that nations which will not help themselves are likely to fall a prey to nations which will, then Federation became embodied; it was no longer an abstract theory, but a definite scheme for practical politics.

In 1889 Major-General Edwards was sent out by England to inspect the Australian forces. In addition to his detailed report on the troops of each colony, he submitted a memorandum of advice strongly recommending "the federation of the forces of all the Australian colonies." The shrewd Sir Henry, with that sensitive finger ever on the public pulse, and that silver tongue miraculously responsive to the finger's message, judged that the time was come for an appeal to the people in favour of Federal Union. To secure the Colonies from foreign aggression was of the first importance; for that purpose General Edwards had considered the federation of the Colonial forces highly desirable, and in order to effect this some kind of Federal Union was indispensable. Sir Henry Parkes accordingly advocated a convention of the leading men from all the colonies to devise a Constitution and bring into existence a Federal Parliament. As a step

towards this a conference took place at Melbourne in 1890 between the Federal Councils and representatives of New South Wales and New Zealand.¹ This body recommended a National Convention and, the consent of the several parliaments having been obtained, the Sydney Convention of 1891 commenced sitting under the presidency of Sir Henry. The result of their labours must not be under-valued. Though the draft bill drawn up by them never passed into law, it formed the basis of the bill which eventually secured acceptance; it afforded a definite scheme for discussion, educated public opinion, and showed the world that Australia already possessed statesmen capable of framing a sound and liberal constitution. And yet it is not surprising that the bill of 1891 was shelved by the Colonial Parliaments. In the first place, from the days of the Long Parliament at least, no Parliament has liked to sanction aught derogatory to its own authority. Now it was quite clear that if the Federal Parliament was to become an accomplished fact, the power and prestige of the State Parliaments would be materially diminished, and their numbers probably reduced. It is contrary to human nature for a man to be anxious to abolish his own salary. In the second place public opinion was not decidedly in favour of the bill: the Labour Party especially disliked it; in the weaker decentralised Parliaments they would, they thought, have more chance of carrying social legislation than in a strong Central Assembly of the collective wisdom of the Classes. This attitude was not unreasonable; certainly the Labour

¹ It was at a banquet in honour of the assembling of this Conference that Sir Henry Parkes made use of the famous phrase, "The crimson thread of kinship runs through us all."

Party have won by waiting; they have both exercised more influence on the State Parliaments than they would have hoped to exercise in the Federal Houses, and they have secured a considerably more democratic constitution under the present act.

Sir Henry Parkes's government was ousted from power in October, 1891, without succeeding in carrying an approval of the bill through the New South Wales Parliament. And the succeeding government, that of Sir George Dibbs, was even more apathetic, if not antipathetic. While New South Wales only played with the bill, it availed little for the other Colonies to take it seriously. It now struck Sir Henry that it would be the best course to follow the example of the original American States and ask not Parliament, but the electors themselves to choose representatives for the purpose of drawing up an amended bill; but the suggestion fell flat, and Federation seemed, in one of its most prominent opponent's words, "as dead as Julius Cæsar."¹

The politicians of New South Wales had done their best to stifle the bill; but the people now began to agitate in favour of the movement. The Australian Natives' Association and the Federal Leagues exercised wide educative influence. At a conference at Corowa in 1893 Dr. Quick of Bendigo suggested the passing of Enabling Acts in the different Colonies providing for the popular election of representatives to amend the bill, and for submitting it when amended to a Referendum.

In 1894 Mr. G. H. Reid succeeded Sir George Dibbs as Premier, professed his adhesion to the Federal

principle, and, calling a conference of Australian premiers, carried resolutions substantially embodying Dr. Quick's suggestion of Enabling Acts and a Referendum. The new government now busied itself with fiscal matters, and succeeded in introducing a nearer approximation to Free Trade in New South Wales than any other Colony has attempted. The Enabling Act was passed with surprisingly little opposition in December, 1895. South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania followed suit. In Queensland the two Houses quarrelled over it; but Western Australia gave a conditional adherence. The election took place early in March, 1897, and resulted in the return of fifty men thoroughly representative of the political intelligence of Australia, all, or nearly all, strong Federalists on lines similar to those of the previous bill. When on March 22nd, the delegates assembled at Adelaide, Mr. Barton, who had been returned at the top of the poll for New South Wales with nearly one hundred thousand votes, was chosen leader of the Convention, and it was decided to draft a fresh bill.

On April 22nd the result of the work of the various committees appeared in the first draft of a Constitution. On September 2nd (the sitting having been postponed till then to enable the Premiers to attend the Queen's Diamond Jubilee) the Convention met at Sydney, and proceeded to improve the draft bill in the light of the criticism passed upon it by the State Legislatures in the form of nearly three hundred suggested amendments. The final session of the Convention took place in Melbourne in the beginning of 1898, and the Constitution Bill was now referred to the people. The Referendum of 1898 was the cause of considerable excitement in New South

¹ Sir John Robertson was the author of the phrase; which was cleverly turned for his own purposes by Mr. Barton, who pointed out that the murderers of Cæsar were not in all respects commendable, and that if Cæsar died, Cæsarism lived on.

Wales, where opposition was strong. The vote showed a majority in favour of the bill; but as the number voting for it did not reach the eighty thousand minimum stipulated by an amended Enabling Act, the effect was that New South Wales rejected the bill. All the other voting colonies accepted it by satisfactory majorities.

Mr. Reid, the New South Wales Premier, who had voted for the bill, but had spoken against it,—a paradoxical position which naturally afforded much scope for the political caricaturist—now seized his opportunity. He suggested a conference of premiers to consider amendments that should make the bill more acceptable to New South Wales.¹ The other Premiers were naturally not particularly well disposed to such a conference; moreover a general election was imminent in New South Wales, which might result in Mr. Barton's taking Mr. Reid's place as Premier. When, however, Mr. Reid had come victorious from the polls (though with a reduced majority), and had carried resolutions through the House making clear in what respects he wished the bill amended, the Premiers of the six Colonies met at Melbourne, and conceded Mr. Reid, on behalf of New South Wales, much, though not all, that he asked. On June 20th, 1899, the second Referendum took place in New South

Wales, and the bill was declared carried. The other Colonies, on the result being known, passed the amended bill by majorities aggregating over two hundred thousand.

It only remained now to secure the Imperial assent, and a delegation, with Mr. Barton at its head, was despatched to London for the purpose of watching the bill through Parliament.

Arriving at Westminster in March, 1900, the delegates, as will be remembered, found the objections of the Imperial Government to centre mainly round the judicial clauses, which restricted the right of appeal to the Privy Council. After considerable friction (the delegates maintaining that they had no power to alter the bill in any way) a compromise was arrived at, the bill was brought by Mr. Chamberlain before an interested and cordial House, passed amid cheers, and on July 9th, 1900, duly received the Royal Assent¹

It would be to lay claim to a characteristic essentially undesirable and un-English to ascribe any great originality to the Australian Federal Constitution; for original constitutions seldom long survive their origin, while it has been a persistent quality of the English mind never to make a new law when the same result can be obtained by re-interpreting an old one, and to distrust even a reasonable innovation unless it wear an ancient mask.

He, then, who would look for a brand-new Constitution, leaping full grown from the head of Mr. Barton and his colleagues, will be disappointed. The roots of the Australian

¹ The writer was present at a great meeting in Sydney at which Mr. Reid brought forward this proposal. An amusing instance occurred of the Premier's unrivalled gift of effective popular repartee. "Mr. Reid," said a raucous voice from the gallery, "in the event of the other Premiers refusing to meet you, what would you do?" Mr. Reid, without an instant's hesitation turned to the enquirer, and said, in his monotonous high-pitched tones, audible in every corner: "Sir, in that most lamentable—and, may I add, most unlikely?—contingency, I should consult you." The meeting was convulsed and the enquirer subsided.

¹ The Federation was made complete by the accession, at the eleventh hour, of Western Australia, the only outstanding Colony, where a referendum, taken on July 31st, 1900, resulted in an unexpectedly large majority in favour of Union.

Constitution are to be found not in Australia nor in the critical nineteenth century, not even altogether in England and the creative thirteenth century,¹ but in the earliest records of the Aryan race, when Homeric monarchs consulted their legislative councils, while Thersites aired his lungs in the assemblies. All these three elements, king, council, assembly, have their counterparts in the Australian Constitution; nor, assuredly, is Thersites wanting.

The strictly Federal element is of later growth. Nor is this a matter of surprise, Federation involving a somewhat complex political conception of dual citizenship. The citizen of a State joining a Federation does not cease, on becoming a citizen of the Federation, from being a citizen of the State. The States of a Federation agree for certain purposes to unite permanently into a nation, and to have a national executive and legislature for those purposes; but they still retain their individuality, and each keeps its own executive and legislature for the functions which have not been handed over to the Federation.

The nations of ancient Greece, in all but size presenting an instructive parallel to the Australian Colonies,—they, too, being communities of men of common race, religion, and speech, politically independent, and free to develop each on its own lines—formed no distinct Federal Union till after the crown of the world had irrevocably fallen from the brows of Hellas. In 280 B.C., however, we have in the Achæan League a true example of Federation, which, though somewhat crude in form, bestowed

good government on a large part of Greece for nearly a century and a half. The formal extension of the Roman franchise to the provinces accustomed men to the idea of a dual citizenship, though distance prevented it from being more than an idea. On the fall of the Empire the germs of Federal development were trampled beneath the steps of triumphant Feudalism. No more was heard of them for a thousand years, though we may see a federal analogy in the dual relationship of a feudal vassal to his lord and to his king. The mediæval unions of cities, such as the Lombardic, the Rhenish, and the Hanseatic Leagues, were rather temporary commercial alliances than real Federations. The same was at first the case with the Swiss League of the Thirteen Places, although it afterwards developed into a true Federal Union. We come to the verge of modern history with the Confederation¹ in 1579 of the Dutch provinces, on the eve of their glorious struggle for liberty against the tyranny of Spain.

Two hundred years later the American Constitution applied the Federal idea to the English governmental system, as then existing, or as understood by the lawyers to exist. The German Federation of 1870 applied the Federal idea to a Monarchy. The Federation of Canada in 1867 was the first instance of a Federation under the British Crown, and was the model on which Sir Henry Parkes based his earliest schemes of Australian Union.

The Federal Constitution of Australia owes much to previous Federal experiments, especially to those of the

¹ The House of Commons, more than any other part of the Constitution, may be said to have had a founder in De Montfort, in what Freeman calls "the wonderful thirteenth century, the great creative and destructive age throughout the world."

¹ By a Confederation as distinct from a Federation is meant a weaker bond of union, wherein the citizens of the States have no part in the Federal Government, but the Federal Body exerts its authority merely through the governments of the several States.

United States and of Canada ; but it claims to have carried democratic principles to greater lengths than has ever been attempted in any previous constitutional document. The main difficulty that beset the framers was the divergent history and characteristics of the different Colonies ; some were larger than others, some were richer, some were more populous ; some had borrowed much, others less ; some had highly Protective systems, others approximated to Free Trade. Had these differences not existed, possibly the best step would have been a complete unification, such as took place when the seven English States of the Heptarchy came under one ruler. But although a scheme of Australian Unification was seriously proposed, it was never seriously supported ; for it was realised that no Australian Colony would be willing to lose its individuality.

A Federation, then, implying the continued individuality of all component States, it was essential that the individuality of the larger States should not be allowed to swamp that of the smaller. On a basis of population New South Wales, for example, would be entitled to nearly eight times as many members in the legislature as little Tasmania, or vast, but sparsely peopled, Western Australia. But it was hopeless to expect either of the latter Colonies to consent to Federation on such terms. Accordingly the framers of the Constitution had recourse to the device adopted by the American Republic, and while maintaining the principle of proportional representation in the House of Representatives, gave each State the same number of members in the Senate.

The fiscal difficulty was met with a less satisfactory solution, which was responsible for much of the hostility displayed to the bill. By a clause

suggested by Sir Edward Braddon, and in general unceremoniously referred to as the Braddon Blot, it was decided that the Federal expenses should be met by customs and excise duties in the following way. Previously each Colony had had its separate tariff. To obviate the pecuniary difficulties in which particular Colonies might have found themselves, if, while intercolonial duties were abolished, other customs and excise were devoted solely to the Federal expenses, it was provided that only one fourth of the said customs and excise should be devoted to Federal purposes, the remaining three fourths being restored to the separate Colonies in proportion to their actual contributions.¹ By this device intercolonial Free Trade was indeed assured ; but the fact that four times as much customs revenue was to be raised as was required for Federal purposes,—that is to say, an annual sum of eight or nine million pounds—made extra-colonial Protection not less certain. Mr. Reid, indeed, at the first Federal election, led his party as the champion of Free Trade ; but Free Trade with a tariff of eight million pounds for less than four million people, was less a practical policy than a piece of adroit political practice. The Braddon clause is certainly not an ideally satisfactory arrangement ; but though many objected, none was able to suggest a more feasible scheme. New South Wales was perforce, therefore, content, with the other Colonies, to adopt it, with Mr. Reid's proviso that at the end of ten years the whole matter should come up for re-consideration. Meanwhile the financial clauses of the

¹ This provision was to last for five years after the imposition of a uniform tariff, afterwards in such proportions as should seem fair to the Federal Parliament. West Australia was allowed five years in which to abolish its intercolonial duties.

bill secure one main object of Federation, the sweeping away of all inter-colonial barriers. The first duty of the Parliament, which the Heir Apparent to the Crown of Great Britain has just opened with so much pomp and circumstance at Melbourne, will be to impose a uniform tariff in the name, not of scattered and jealous Colonies but, of a United Australia.

The question of the division of functions between the Federal and the State Parliaments is settled in the Australian Constitution by the opposite device to that which was adopted in the Canadian Federation. By the latter the Federal Parliament has in its province all functions not assigned to the State Legislatures. Under the Australian Constitution the State Parliaments are left all functions that are not definitely assigned to the Federal Legislature:¹ to the Federal Parliament are entrusted taxation, trade, defence, borrowing, postal services; the States retain control of education, public works, the railways, and the provincial administration of justice.²

In the event of the clashing of Federal and State Legislatures, a guardian, or interpreter of the Constitution, is supplied by the new created Australian High Court; which will determine whether in any case either Legislature has acted *ultra vires*, and from which to the Privy Council, as has been seen, appeal will only be allowed at the desire of the High Court itself.

The question of the amendment of the Constitution is of even more importance. For the amending authority

is in the juridical sense the Sovereign (although in Professor Dicey's phrase, a monarch "that slumbers and sleeps"), superior even to the Constitution itself. The framers of the Australian Constitution endeavoured to make the Constitution sufficiently rigid for security, but sufficiently flexible for progress. They followed current English political thought in believing that the American method under which, as is well known, only fifteen amendments have been passed in nearly eight times that number of years, erred on the side of rigidity. They therefore laid down that an amendment to the Constitution should become law if carried by an absolute majority of both Federal Houses, and confirmed by popular Referendum.¹

Of the two Houses of the Federal Parliament, each has the right of initiating legislation, with the exception of money-bills which originate in the House of Representatives alone. The members of the two Houses² are paid equally, the stipend being fixed at the rate of £400 a year; tenure of office lasting for three years in the House of Representatives, for six years in the Senate.³ Both Houses are elective, on the principle obtaining in each Colony for the election of the Legislative Assembly,⁴ until the Federal Parliament shall itself fix a franchise.⁵ Provision is made for

¹ The Referendum to show a majority in favour of the proposed amendment, both in the whole Commonwealth and in the greater number of the States.

² In the Senate six for each Colony; in the House of Representatives twice the total number of the Senate, in proportion to population.

³ Half the Senators are to retire in every third year.

⁴ Thus in South Australia women will vote in the Federal Elections, the total vote being divided by two.

⁵ Which must not, however, be more restrictive than that of any Colony. Mr. Barton has already declared himself in favour of adult suffrage.

¹ But the Federal Legislature may at any time add to its functions, adopting the ordinary procedure laid down for the amendment of the Constitution.

² But the Commonwealth can take over the railways at the consent of the Colonies.

the settlement of possible deadlocks by the device of a joint sitting of the two Houses, an absolute majority to be final.

Such are the main provisions of the Constitution Act of the Australian Commonwealth, so far as a long and complicated document can be conveniently summarised. It must be for posterity,—the “unnumbered millions” to whom Sir George Grey was so fond of alluding—to decide how far it really is the “monument of political wisdom” which Mr. Chamberlain declared it to be when he introduced it to the British Parliament.

It is not claimed that Federation is an ideal method of government. Undoubtedly it has the defects of its qualities. Thus the admirable flexibility of the English model has to be abandoned. The liberty of the people is bound by a written document, and the Federal Parliament can never be animated by quite the sense of responsibility possessed by the all-powerful English Commons. Moreover the simplicity of English procedure is rendered impossible. Even before Federation, if we judge by British canons, Australia was vastly over-governed. New South Wales, for example, besides its Legislative Council, had, and has, a paid Legislative Assembly of one hundred and twenty-five members for a population of less than one and a half millions.¹ Under Federation none of these Chambers is abolished, although it is hoped in time that the number of members may be reduced. Thus in addition to the twelve Chambers already existing, with their Governors, two others are created, together with a Governor-General. May we not legitimately

fear the dangers of over-legislation, which have been the result of the Federal system in America, where, Mr. Godkin tells us, fifteen thousand, seven hundred and thirty acts and resolutions were passed in one year? There are, he says, “in the United States no less than four hundred and forty-seven National Legislators and six thousand, five hundred and seventy-eight State Legislators,” exclusive of country and city officials; a ratio to population which, if adopted in England, would bring the numbers of the British Parliament up to at least four thousand.

The cumbersomeness of the financial clauses has been already mentioned. The provision of equal State representation in the Senate has also caused considerable criticism in the larger Colonies, and so far as it involves disproportionate representation,—a man's vote in Tasmania being eight times the value of one in New South Wales—is a defect, albeit a defect inherent in an equitable Federation under existing conditions.

Australian Federalists do not deny such defects; but they look to more than compensating advantages. In the first place they hope, from the destruction of intercolonial barriers, a great extension of intercolonial trade. Instead of one free local market, the Australian agriculturalist, or manufacturer, will now, at one stroke, have six. In the second place, Federation is expected to induce a closer consciousness of national unity. “For the first time,” to use Mr. Barton's words, “in the world's history, there will be a Nation for a Continent, and a Continent for a Nation.” The native Australian¹ has assuredly always been patriotic; in spite of intercolonial

¹ The six Colonies with a population of three and three-quarter millions, have no less than six hundred and sixty legislators in the State Parliaments, four hundred and twenty-eight in the Legislative Assemblies, two hundred and thirty-two in the Councils.

¹ In Colonial parlance a *native Australian* does not now signify one of the aboriginal inhabitants, but a white man born in the Colonies.

bickerings and jealousies, he has always possessed a dim consciousness that he was an Australian first and a Colonial afterwards. Had he not possessed this consciousness, all the politicians in Melbourne and Sydney could never have induced him to take the bold and irrevocable leap in the dark that Federation involves. But patriotism will now strike deeper roots, and spread wider branches; while its fruits will be shown in nobler ideals of social and of individual life. Nor need the national spirit necessarily clash with loyalty to the Empire. There are those who think it will; there are those who believe that the Imperial influence (largely a Government House influence) is, and will increasingly prove, a retrogressive force in the social and political life of Australia. But if the Imperial authorities send out the right stamp of men for Governors, if England does her best to secure free trade in labour and ability throughout the Empire, if she will open her courts to our lawyers, her schools to our schoolmasters, her churches to our clergymen, and in return send out her own to us, I can see no reason why Federation should not prove the stepping-stone, not to Separation, but to that great Federation of the English peoples which has been the lode-star of so many imperial-minded statesmen of our time.

Finally the Australians hope,—for without this no political or social progress can be assured—that Federation will bring the best men into public life, so that, in the Platonic phrase, the Kings will be Philosophers, and the Philosophers Kings. The whole political life of Australia should be set upon a higher plane. The abstinence of the ablest men from politics is admittedly a grave danger to American progress. And of the men of

character and culture and ability that are attracted into American politics, it would appear, from Mr. Bryce's masterly exposition, that the Federal Houses, and especially the Senate, attract too large a proportion. For although they attract the better men, they have really the less vital functions. "The grave political functions of the country," says Mr. Godkin, "are discharged in the State Legislatures, and by inferior men," while "most of the inhabitants pass their lives without ever coming into contact with the Federal authorities."

In the Australian Constitution Federalists maintain that while on the one hand the functions of government have been so equitably distributed between State and National Legislatures, that Australians will tolerate inferior men in neither; on the other hand such additional power and prestige will attach to office in the National Parliament, that many of the ablest and most successful men in the State will no longer be found unwilling to sacrifice some portion of business or of leisure to do their duty to their country. If such hopes are not altogether borne out by the *personnel* of the candidates for the first Federal Parliament, there is at least a leaven among them who in ability and character would do honour to any deliberative assembly in the world. Given such men in increasing numbers, given a sane, law-abiding, but progressive public opinion for their support, and Australians may indeed hope a glorious fulfilment of the proud national aspiration, *Advance Australia!*

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